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INTRODUCTION

Honourable Sir and Members of the Committee on Religious Education in the Public Schools:

The Canadian Jewish Congress was established in 1919 and is the national organization representative of the Jewish community of Canada. In its various regions, Ontario being known as the Central Region, it deals with regional matters. Delegates chosen from the various organizations, congregations, societies, ideological groupings and other bodies, secular and religious, in which we associate as individuals sharing a common heritage, meet in plenary sessions and as regional councils at regular intervals to consider and determine policies and programs directed towards the conduct of our communal affairs in a manner conducive to the common welfare. We thus appear before you as the official spokesman of our community, which numbers some 115,000 in Ontario, to present our policy and recommendations in respect of the matters with which you are charged.

We are grateful for this opportunity to share with you our views on the question of religious education in the public schools of our province. We have been greatly troubled and concerned over this matter in the years since 1944; it has been given high priority on our day-to-day agenda of vexing community and inter-community questions. We sincerely and earnestly hope that your Committee will succeed in resolving the difficulties inherent in this question; we also hope that our presentation will be helpful towards this end.

We intend to proceed in a general way as follows; we shall:

1. present to you an historical survey of the various policies and practices concerned with the teaching of religion in the public schools of Ontario;
2. highlight certain key incidents and periods in that history;
3. consider the present provisions from the point of view of the legal requirements, the texts devised to guide the teachers, and the provisions for exemption;
4. deal with the special problem posed by the kindergarten;
5. place before you the experiences of several communities in the province;
6. place before you a compendium of the views of press, individuals and public bodies in opposition to the present course;
7. summarize our own reasons for opposition to any course of religious instruction in the public schools;
8. consider alternatives proposed to you by various presentations already made to you;

9. consider certain other curricular changes devised in Ontario and elsewhere to deal with the problem of moral and spiritual guidance for students;
10. summarize our conclusions.

In the foregoing development of our position we shall place before you a number of propositions, as follows:

Proposition 1.

From 1860 until 1944 religious instruction in the public schools was not a part of the curriculum (except for a three year period from 1871-74); therefore it cannot be said to be in the tradition of our public school system.

Proposition 2.

The introduction of doctrinal religious education into the public schools of Ontario in 1944 marked the first time such instruction had been prescribed as part of the curriculum in any North American public non-denominational school system.

Proposition 3.

The books prescribed as teachers' guides were hastily introduced, tardily revised, and remain historically and religiously inaccurate at least insofar as their references to the Jewish religion and to Jews are concerned, and they are in their very nature incapable of achieving acceptable objectivity.

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Proposition 4.

Words such as sectarian, non-sectarian or Judaeo-Christian have no fixed meaning but vary in their sense according to the purpose and intent of the user.

Proposition 5.

Provision for exemption, whether at the instance of the parent, the child, the teacher, the principal, the School Board, or the minister does not meet the basic issue, namely that any instruction in doctrinal religion has no place in the public school.

Proposition 6.

Religious education creates a special problem in the kindergarten quite different from that which occurs in the other grades and which mars the child's introduction into the public school system.

Proposition 7.

Experience has shown that even with the utmost good will the course causes friction and ill will.

Proposition 8.

Public opinion, as generally expressed, opposes the present policy of religious education in the public schools.

Proposition 9.

There are reasons in principle for opposition to any course of doctrinal religious instruction in the public schools.

Proposition 10.

Except for those among us who feel that true objectivity cannot be attained, we do not object in principle to courses "about" religion or courses in "comparative religion". We recognize that such courses are extremely difficult to devise and teach.

Proposition 11.

Moral and spiritual values can be presented to pupils in a public school system by the use of pedagogical techniques not requiring religious sanctions.

PART A: HISTORY

CHAPTER I: HISTORICAL SURVEY

Introduction

Proposition 1: From 1860 until 1944 religious instruction in the public schools was not a part of the curriculum (except for a three year period from 1871-74); therefore it cannot be said to be in the tradition of our public school system.

The public school system of Ontario was based on the principle enunciated by Ryerson "that it was not the function of the central authority to prescribe religious instruction".*

The legal statutory provisions which have been consistently found in the law relating to religious education in Ontario's public schools are the following:

"Subject to the regulations, pupils shall be allowed to receive such religious instruction as their parents and guardians desire.

"No pupil in a public school shall be required to read or study in or from any religious book or to join in any exercise of devotion or religion objected to by his parent or guardian".**

* The Development of Education in Canada,
Dr. Charles E. Phillips, Gage, Toronto 1957, p.328
(hereafter cited "Phillips Development").

** R.S.O. 1960, c.330, s.7(1) and (2) -
in substantially this form these provisions
have been in the Ontario statutes governing
the public schools since the mid-1800's.

The Freedom of Worship Act (1851)*, which provides:

"Whereas the recognition of legal equality among all Religious Denominations is an admitted principle of Colonial Legislation, and whereas in the state and condition of this Province, to which such principle is peculiarly applicable, it is desirable that the same should receive the sanction of direct Legislative Authority, recognizing and declaring the same as a fundamental principle of our civil polity: Be it therefore declared and enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice of the Legislative Council and of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, constituted and assembled by virtue and under the authority of an Act passed in the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and intituled, an Act to re-unite the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, and for the Government of Canada, and it is hereby declared and enacted by the authority of the same, That the free exercise and enjoyment of Religious Profession and Worship, without discrimination or preference, so as the same be not made an excuse for acts of licentiousness, or a justification of practices inconsistent with the peace and safety of the Province, is by the constitution and laws of the Province allowed to all Her Majesty's subjects within the same."

This statute protects both religious "profession" and "worship". The significance of the distinction is that the former obviously refers to private affirmation and belief in religious principles as distinct from worship which may involve an overt public demonstration of adherence to a religion.

This statute forbids both "discrimination" and "preference". The significance of this distinction is that there must be neither discrimination against the enjoyment of a religious profession or form of worship, nor preference in favour of the enjoyment of a particular religious profession or form of worship.

* 14-15 Vict. c.175 s.1., and still the law of Ontario. It appears most recently in R.S.O.1897 c.306, s.1.

Prof. Frank R. Scott, former Dean of the McGill Law School, has expressed the view that the statute (which applies to both Quebec and Ontario) cannot be repealed or amended by the Provincial Legislatures. He goes on to say "... If this is true it means ... that our two largest provinces are under a Religious Bill of Rights. They cannot change it, and the Parliament of Canada, while able to, is certainly unlikely to change it. Hence we seem to find ourselves endowed by history with a peculiarly untouchable statute".*

What do these provisions mean in terms of what happened in the classroom?

"Religious exercises until 1884 were left by law to the discretion of the trustees and in practice largely to the decision of the teacher, but were recommended by the central authority and were in general use. Religious instruction, also with the approval of the trustees, might be given by visiting clergymen - from 1857 until 1924 after four o'clock and from 1924 to 1944 before or after school hours. Instruction ... as illustrated by a 'general lesson' recommended in 1847 was ethical in character although supported by references to Scripture".**

Dr. Phillips points out that this instruction was for a brief period from 1871-1874 included in the prescribed program for senior classes, but at no other time prior to 1944 was such instruction part of any prescribed curriculum.

* F.R. Scott, Civil Liberties & Canadian Federalism, University of Toronto Press 1959, p.16.

** Phillips Development, p.328 (emphasis the author's).

W.D.E. Matthews in a published abstract of his D.Paed. thesis entitled "The History of the Religious Factor in Ontario Elementary Education",* deals with the same period. He says that "the failure of the majority of clergymen to take full advantage of these provisions was one of Ryerson's keen disappointments".

"During the 1860's the religious factor in common school education appears to have suffered a partial eclipse. This decline in the prominence of religious matters appears to be largely attributable to an increased reliance upon the effectiveness of the Sunday school as an institute for religious education".

1871-1874

What happened in the 1871-1874 interval referred to by Dr. Phillips? The background to this innovation is as follows:

"Under the local option arrangements, formal lessons on Christian ethics by teachers, and after-school lessons on Christian dogma by clergymen, were seldom offered in the 1860's. Even in Toronto, a trustee favorably disposed to religious instruction lamented in 1866 that no clergymen, with the exception of a few Anglican ministers, had ever arranged to give such instruction, although he claimed that all pupils in one school had petitioned to be allowed to remain for classes taught by an Anglican minister. Hamilton set an unusual example in 1862 by having religious instruction offered by clergy of different denominations to the thousand or more pupils of the Central Union Grammar and Common School from

* University of Toronto, 1950.

three to four o'clock on Fridays, under a regulation that permitted school hours to be shortened once a week for that purpose. But there had been strong criticism even of recommended religious exercises in the popular press, which questioned the right of the central authority to establish any connection between church and state. During the period of prosperity before Confederation and for a decade thereafter most people were content to leave religious instruction to the Sunday schools. Such quiescence was provocative to Ryerson, who, in spite of his honest caution in legal enactments, had an intense determination that the schools should be an active force for Christianity.

"He wrote a textbook entitled First Lessons in Christian Morals, which a special committee of Protestant ministers in 1871 examined and recommended for sanction by the Council of Public Instruction. At first it was commended in reviews appearing in church publications, but it was then subjected to blasting criticism by The Globe and other newspapers." *

After other protests, including a petition signed by 73 clergymen in 1874, Christian Morals as a prescribed subject was dropped from the curriculum after a three years' trial.

Bible Reading Without Comment

Despite this setback, efforts were continued to impose more religious content upon the schools. In 1878 the Minister of Education "in response to requests of the Anglicans and Presbyterians, interpreted the law to mean that school boards might 'require their Teachers to use the Bible or portions thereof as part of the ordinary exercises of the school, giving, however, such explanations only as are needed for a proper understanding of what is read'." **

* Phillips, Development, p.329.

** Phillips, Development, p.329.

The next Minister, George W. Ross, accepted certain proposals from the clergy and a committee of the Ontario Educational Association. In 1884 revised regulations made it obligatory for teachers to read the Bible without comment and to conduct religious exercises. To assist them an expurgated version of the Scriptures, called the Ross Bible, was prepared, but so controversial was this bowdlerized Bible that it was dropped after only three years in use. In 1887 (and again in 1888) the teachers of Ontario found it necessary to pass a resolution "to categorize as 'unreasonable' a request that they be obliged to give religious instruction in schools".*

The 1897 Incident

On June 3, 1897, a deputation of Anglican clerics - a bishop and four clergymen - approached the Toronto Public School Board to ask that arrangements be made to give religious instruction to pupils in the public schools. The deputation believed that what they were asking was within the provisions then permitted. However, from the details of what they requested, it appears that they were going beyond the permitted arrangements. Bishop Sullivan is reported as saying that:

"Legislation had really made it possible for some religious instruction to be given in the schools, a teacher was allowed to give children passages of Scripture to memorize,

* Minutes of the Ontario Teachers Association, 1887, p.8.

but this could not be dignified by the name of religious instruction. Another concession made was the power allowed trustees to close schools earlier than the prescribed time, so that religious teachings could be given. This was, however, not made compulsory upon the part of the boards and even when children were kept after for instruction and other children allowed to go and play outside, the class was restive and the attempt a failure. The children being instructed would consider themselves prisoners and a premium would be put on the violation of the rule. He hoped the time would come when religious instruction would be given during the regular school hours."*

Another member of the deputation "made the request that the pupils not receiving religious instruction should not be allowed to leave the school, but be taught other subjects in other rooms." **

The Board referred the petition to the Management Committee for consideration.

At the meeting of the Management Committee, on June 10, 1897, a deputation of the Toronto Jewish community (including the late Mr. Edmund Scheuer, who may have been known to some of you) presented a brief which in the words of the Mail and Empire of June 11th was a "lengthy, fervid and vigorous protest". The Star described it as "severely condemnatory". We have appended its full text***; the same arguments, in our view, remain applicable

* Toronto Mail & Empire June 4, 1897.

** Toronto Star, June 4, 1897.

*** See Appendix A

today, 70 years later.

This brief characterized the proposal and its consequences as being

"in the last degree ill-advised, inexpedient, and objectionable and ought not to be entertained for a single moment ... If the suggested change were introduced, it would not only tend to impart a sectarian bias to the character of the teaching given in the schools (which is in itself a most undesirable thing, since the teaching afforded in them should be of such a nature as to hurt the susceptibilities of none, and admit of all children participating in it without detriment to their cherished convictions and beliefs), but it would strike a severe and perhaps an irremediable blow at the very root-principle underlying the institution of the Public School, which is that it should devote itself to the task of educating the citizen, irrespective of denomination, faith or creed, and treat all who seek its advantages on a basis of equality, without any reference whatsoever to religion..."*

That same day the Toronto Trades Council met and adopted a report opposing the introduction of religious teaching into the public schools.

"The report said that to permit the introduction of dogmatic and sectarian teaching such as that asked for by the deputation of clergymen at a recent meeting of the School Board would be nothing short of calamity and should be resisted to the uttermost by every citizen of Toronto.

* See Appendix A.

The Public Schools were designed by the State as unsectarian schools, for the purpose of giving education to the children of the citizens of all classes and creeds, as well as of no creed. It was no part of the business of the State to teach religion. That duty or privilege should rest solely with the parents, the churches and the Sunday schools." *

The Board of Education's Management Committee had reported the matter to a Special Committee on Inspection, which did not meet until the fall, and when it did it decided:

"That after consideration of the question referred to us of religious instruction in the schools, we beg to report that in our opinion it would not be desirable to devote any part of the regular school hours to the giving of sectarian or denominational instruction in the schools." **

The original petitions did not let the matter drop at this point however. Apparently the Toronto Synod a year or two before had asked the government to set apart half an hour every day for religious instruction either by clergymen, their representatives, or failing that, by teachers. Non-participating pupils could be instructed "in ethics or some general subject during the prescribed half-hour". The government, said Dr. Langtry, "had promised to make a reply to the request ... but failed to do so". Later the Department of Education introduced regulations applicable for the ensuing five years

* Toronto Star June 10, 1897.

** Toronto Mail & Empire Sept. 29, 1897; also see Toronto Public School Board Minutes 1897 Appendix 75, p.356; Report of Management Committee Sept.30, 1897.

requiring memorization of Scripture passages. But in Dr. Langtry's reported words "the request of the synod for bread had really been met by giving it a stone".

A second deputation of the Anglican group to the Board on Thursday, October 7, 1897 led to a stormy session of the Board with every member participating. The Board's policy, however, remained unchanged.

The following Monday (October 11, 1897) an editorial in the World headed "Religion in the Schools" said:

"The World does not anticipate that any such retrograde action as the teaching of religious doctrines in the public schools will be countenanced, but we know how soon our splendid Public School system would be ruined if the Anglican clerics had their way. But they won't have it."

Around this time as well, a Baptist delegation appeared before the Board and gave its energetic and effective support to the previous decision of the Board. The Rev. Mr. Eaton "said the Baptists had come to strengthen the hands of the Board ...The Board objected to the proposed change on the ground that it violates the principle of separation of church and state. It would re-open trouble just settled.* It would injure the state by diverting public money to a purpose for which it was not intended. If denominational teachers are countenanced, then anarchists, agnostics, and atheists

* A reference to the Manitoba School Controversy.

must be allowed to teach. 'Turn us all out is the easiest way, gentlemen. If you concede what you have been asked, then the Baptists will fight you, gentlemen,' said Mr. Eaton in conclusion." *

"The Rev. Mr. Bates said it had been represented that very few people, except some Jews, felt strongly opposed to the application. He wished to say that such was not the case ... Baptists recognized the importance of teaching the children ethics, morals, and religion but they erected their own schools for that purpose."**

Mr. C.J. Holman, a lay member of the deputation, referred to the application as "mediaeval". Chancellor Wallace of McMaster University who was also on the Baptist deputation, raised the wider implications:

"The question was larger than Toronto. The influence of the Toronto board was very great and if they adopted the present suggestion the question would be raised in every board in the province ... It was essential to preserve the schools as indicative of the national life of Canada. Canada's educational system was the most characteristic feature of the country. It was fundamental and should be preserved." ***

That was the last to be heard of this matter by the Toronto school board for over 40 years.

* The Toronto World October 22, 1897.

** The Mail & Empire October 22, 1897.

*** The Mail & Empire October 22, 1897.

Around 1900 the Ontario Educational Association and various clergymen urged that there be two lesson periods a week for instruction in Bible knowledge and for the memorization of Scripture. The Government rejected this.*

A book entitled "Christian Instruction in the Public Schools of Ontario" by the Rev. James Middlemiss, D.D. published in Toronto 1901 is extremely revealing in reflecting the factual situation of religious education in Ontario schools at the turn of the century and in disclosing the feelings of that element in the Protestant clergy who were dissatisfied with this situation. The basic complaint made by Dr. Middlemiss was that not only was there insufficient religious instruction in the public schools but, in his view, it was totally absent, a situation which he contrasted with the rights for religious instruction given to the Catholic minority from which, in his view, they reaped full advantage.

"No direct attempt to exclude religious instruction from the Common Schools, as the Public Schools were then called, appears to have been made. But step by step, the great anomaly of the exclusion of Christian instruction from the day schools of the province reached its present height of entire absence**. And now for many years past the Public School teacher may not give Christian instruction to his scholars even to the extent of explaining to them a sentence of Scripture that he is permitted to read in their hearing; the Government, it seems, believing that its acknowledged obliga-

* Matthews Abstract, op cit.

** emphasis added.

tion in relation to the Christian instruction of the youth of this province is fully met by its allowing the use of the schoolroom once a week to any minister of religion who may choose to give Christian lessons to the children of his congregation in addition**to the instructions he is giving them on Sabbath and other days, as a dutiful Christian pastor." *

He pleads that "instruction in the common Protestant Christianity of the Province be made part of the school program" which is his basic thesis and which permeates the entire volume. "We are constrained", he writes, "to protect against the permanent** relegation of religious education in the public schools to the ministers of religion" and he complains against "its essential unreasonableness and inconvenience".***

Referring to the regulation that ministers may teach only children of their own congregation, he writes "it is forgotten that our great concern does not respect our own children. They** are not in need."***

Dr. Middlemiss' complaints in asking for religious instruction in the schools confirm more eloquently than anything we can assert, the fact that in effect there was little - in his words "a complete absence" of - formal religious instruction in the public schools of Ontario in that period. What he was asking actually was for the arrangement that finally did come into effect in 1944, i.e. that religious instruction be given not merely by

* Middlemiss op cit. p.17.

** emphasis the author's.

*** Middlemiss pp.114-117.

occasional clergymen but that it be the responsibility of the classroom teacher, that it be imposed upon all pupils irrespective of their church membership (with the initiative of asking exemption left to pupil or parent), and that this be Protestant doctrinal teaching. He did not, however, achieve any favorable governmental reaction when his book appeared.

From then until the 1920's religious matters received little attention.* Phillips, referring to demands from the OEA and various church conferences up to 1905 for compulsory religious teaching, expresses himself similarly:

"Having held out until then, the central authority was relieved of any strong pressure for many years." **

Regulations

The regulations concerning religious exercises and religious instruction appeared on the front or inside cover of the authorized Register maintained by every classroom teacher in Ontario from the period of the 1880's to the 1940's as follows:

"(3)(a)(1) A clergyman of any denomination shall have the right, and it shall be lawful for the Board to allow him, to give religious instructions to the pupils of his own denomination, in each school-house, at least once a week, before the hour of opening the school in the morning or after the hour of closing the school in the afternoon.

* Matthews op cit.

** Phillips, Development, p.330.

"(ii) Under the same conditions, a clergyman, selected by the clergymen of any number of denominations, shall also have the right to give religious instruction to the pupils belonging to such denominations.

"(b) If the clergymen of more than one denomination apply to give religious instruction in the same school-house where the number of class-rooms is insufficient for all at the same time, the Board shall decide on what day of the week a class-room shall be at the disposal of each, at the time above stated.

"(4) Emblems of a denominational character shall not be exhibited in a Public School during regular school hours." *

These passages confirm the careful restrictions and regulations which were applied to religious instruction in this province's public schools in the period up to the 1940's.

We commend to your attention the rest of the regulations, dealing with religious exercises and the scrupulous attention given to the conditions surrounding exemption from religious exercises. *

Dealing with the actual amount of religious instruction given before 1944 Dr. Phillips has pointed out

"Generally only a small minority of school boards took any action, although there were ups and downs. For example, religious education under this arrangement was given in 4 per cent of the schools in 1920, and 8 per cent of the schools in 1925 - a percentage that persisted for some time." **

* See Appendix B

** Religion and Our Public Schools, 1961.

A Significant Lesson

We learn from this that religious education was considered as something strictly outside the school program and curriculum. Beyond opening prayers, reading from the Bible without comment and for a while memorization of Bible texts, the school system undertook nothing by way of religious instruction nor was it permitted to. Whatever was given after school hours by clergymen was a purely voluntary arrangement and had no relation to the school as such. What the Toronto Anglican group was asking for in 1897 was that the instruction be given within the time and jurisdiction of school authority and school discipline, that "dissident" children not be permitted to leave the school premises but be required to stay on and be given some other work or lesson to do. However, if the instruction were to be part of the school program, though given by outside clergymen, it was regarded as clearly in violation of the spirit and the letter of the regulations that then applied, and, in the words of the World editorial, was considered as a "retrograde step".

Aside, therefore, from the purely legal and regulatory aspect, we can here sense the atmosphere and feeling of an urban, predominantly Protestant Canadian community: firm in its religious convictions, confident in its ability to pass on its spiritual heritage to the next generation, and true to its tradition of individualism and self-help unfettered by any reliance on the arm of the state, and this at a period when "cultural pluralism" or

"a pluralistic society" were as yet unknown phrases in Canadian life. Despite the fact that a much higher majority than today subscribed to a common faith, it appears that it was not permissible for this faith to be taught within the jurisdiction of the public school.

Frequently the proponents either of the 1944 system, or of a variation of it with some of its more objectionable features alleviated or removed, premise their position as if a religious instruction curriculum was an integral part of our heritage and tradition, historically a part of our society and educational system from the distant past in unbroken succession to the present. We submit that the facts, as revealed by the foregoing historical outline, establish that this is just not so, and that the present Ontario law in this regard is completely out of step with history.

CHAPTER II - 1944 - THE NEW REGULATIONS

Proposition 2: The introduction of doctrinal religious education into the public schools of Ontario in 1944 marked the first time such instruction had been prescribed as part of the curriculum in any North American public non-denominational school system.

In the Speech from the Throne in February 1944, the Government announced that religious education would be offered in public and secondary schools. The basic differences between the new arrangement and what had preceded were that

- a) the instruction could be given by the classroom teacher;
- b) it was given within school-hours;
- c) there was a prescribed course for the teacher to follow authorized by the Department of Education with guide-books to follow;
- d) though parents and pupils could claim exemption from taking the course and teachers and even boards could claim exemption from offering it, the provision of religious instruction to all, no matter what the religious denomination or belief of the pupil or teacher, became the regular procedure and the onus was placed on the objector to declare himself an exception.

When this system was introduced in 1944 it was "contrary to precedent in a North American public school system".* This statement is still valid in every respect, for to this day the Ontario practice is completely at variance with any public non-denominational school system anywhere in North America. Nowhere else on the continent is there a public school system which imposes this kind of religious education. There are, it is true, two Canadian

* Phillips, Development, p.330.

provinces which have something similar - Quebec and Newfoundland; they, however, have historically confessional - not public - school systems.

The argument is often heard that the educational system of Ontario has always been Christian in spirit and intent and that the change that occurred in 1944 was the logical extension of a development that had firm roots in Ontario educational history.

That there was from the outset a premise that the schools should rest on the foundation of "Christian morality", we would not deny. But to equate this with an historical justification for religious instruction is to stretch the facts quite unduly. For the evidence as we have seen, points to one conclusion: that until 1944 all attempts to introduce religious instruction as part of the school system were resisted vigorously and consistently and came to nought. Reliance on "principles of Christian morality" never was interpreted by educational authorities, on either the Departmental or on the School Board level, as authority to set up a religious curriculum within the schools. This at all times had been regarded as the duty of the church and of the home. (The one exception, as we have seen, was short-lived.) There can be no doubt in one's mind after studying the history of religious education in the public schools in Ontario, no matter from which point of view it is written, that the entire trend of our educational history was away from this development. Consistently, whenever the matter arose,

and despite the cooperative and benevolent attitude taken towards religion in general, our Department of Education regularly rejected any attempts to incorporate religious instruction as part of the curriculum in Ontario schools. Despite the high level of religious belief and conviction that prevailed - or more likely because of this - there was no deviation from this position until 1944 when the government introduced a course which was a radical innovation in the whole tradition of the public schools in this province, out of step with the trend in this country and throughout the continent and which is still to this day peculiar to this province.

In the words of Dr. Phillips, it is crystal clear "that the introduction of religious education during the school day was a radical step at variance with the North American tradition in public education." *

It is now generally conceded that the introduction of the 1944 course in religious education was done in a hasty and ill-conceived manner and left much to be desired. The Rev. E.R. McLean** says:

"It is no secret that the policy of the Minister came as something of a surprise of the Inter-Church Committee and was received with something less than rejoicing. In the eyes of the Committee the application of this policy to Ontario

* Religion and our Public Schools, p.9

** The chairman of the Inter-Church Committee for Religious Education (originally founded in the 1920's).

presented certain serious difficulties. Teachers were without adequate training. There were no Ontario textbooks. If such teaching was to have religious as well as instructional value (which the Committee desired) the teachers should be persons of religious conviction. The change might cause division and discord in some communities." *

A memorandum to the Department of Education was submitted by the Inter-Church Committee on Week-Day Religious Education on April 3, 1944, and this foresaw "certain difficulties" including the following:

"...3. If such training is to have religious and not merely instructional values, it is essential that the teachers themselves should be persons of religious conviction." **

"4. We fear such a plan as the Minister of Education proposes if carried out at once would probably cause division and discord in some of our communities and even among Christian people themselves since it might raise the old question of the relation of Church and State in this field." ***

That any religious instruction given before 1944 was negligible is candidly admitted by the Inter-Church Committee. It was indicated that a tremendous increase was expected in the number of schools affected.****

By altering the regulations, what was previously the negligible exception became automatically the rule. In the words of a recommendation made by the Inter-Church

* Religion in Ontario Schools, Toronto 1965, p.23.

** McLean ibid p.24

*** " " " " "

**** " " " p.22

Committee:

"Note: Under the present Act and Regulations,* religious instruction can be provided only before or after the regular school day and even that becomes effective only when the local School Board and clergymen of the district go to the trouble of having a special resolution passed and having that special resolution endorsed by the Minister of Education. The onus is upon those who want something done. The above suggested amendment puts the onus upon those who want nothing done." **

* i.e. those prior to 1944.

** McLean p.27.

CHAPTER III - THE TEACHERS' GUIDES

Proposition 3: The books prescribed as teachers guides were hastily introduced, tardily revised, and remain historically and religiously inaccurate at least insofar as their references to the Jewish religion and to Jews are concerned, and they are in their very nature incapable of achieving acceptable objectivity.

The Inter-Church Committee was decidedly unhappy with the hasty revision of certain British-published manuals for adjustment to our Canadian schools which, they pointed out, function in a different context. The changes made in some cases were no more than substitutions for obvious Britishisms in vocabulary such as "greengrocer" and "lift". The Hon. Mr. Drew's decision that the new system should go into effect in September 1944 created a major problem.

"The Committee was strongly of the opinion that the revision of six Teachers' Guides (Grades 1 to 6) could not be completed in time. Its members felt that their reputation as leaders in Christian education was at stake and that hasty work would not commend itself to the Province at a time when general support and commendation were needed for such an important undertaking.

"On July 20, 1944, a meeting was held with Premier Drew at which a satisfactory understanding was reached with regard to the two pressing problems of Teachers' Guides and teacher qualifications. The Committee had proposed the use of the Cambridge Guides and with this the Premier was in agreement but the Committee was very loath to see the books introduced with so hurried a revision as then seemed inevitable." *

* McLean p.29-30.

How was this impasse resolved?

"The Premier proposed that a statement be inserted at the beginning of the Guides to the effect that they should be regarded as 'provisional and temporary' and pledged that he would suspend their publication if, after reading the revisions of the first two books the Committee felt that they should not be used." *

"This" in the words of the Rev. Mr. McLean "met the problem".** Rarely was a problem "met" more easily, and rarely was it evaded with greater agility and ease for so long a time. The "temporary and provisional" manuals so described on their title-pages remained unchanged in some cases for nearly 20 years.

The statement which was inserted at the beginning of the Guides reads as follows in the first edition:

"This Teachers' Guide in Religious Education is authorized by the Minister of Education for use in Grade 1 of the Ontario Public Schools. The book in its present form is to be regarded as provisional and experimental. The Minister of Education desires that comments or criticisms of the book shall be sent from teachers and others who are making use of the Guide. Such comments should be addressed to the Secretary, Religious Education Committee, Parliament Buildings, Toronto, and may be forwarded at any time during the school year ... Comments and reports should reach the Department of Education not later than May 31, 1945, in order that a revised edition of the Guide may be prepared for issuance to the schools at the beginning of September 1945."

The then Minister of Education, the Hon. George Drew, who was also then Prime Minister of Ontario, declared in the

* McLean p.30.

** McLean p.30.

debates in the Legislature "that it was clearly stated that the books which were introduced were only experimental, that they were a first step. They can be improved in the light of experience." *

For almost two decades after the publication of the guide-books, despite this public request by the Department of Education inviting revision, despite the recommendation of the Hope Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, despite repeatedly expressed criticisms by the Canadian Jewish Congress, and although after all of these, new editions and reprintings appeared from time to time, very little basic change was effected in the passages and sections complained of.

"Though some time and effort were spent on revision, unhappily positive action effecting changes was not taken over a period of years, when objections were again forcefully raised ... Many were not aware that the Commission had given the above direction ... When all is said and done it must be confessed that an important opportunity to remove a constant source of annoyance and injustice was wasted." **

The Hon. Mr. Drew reverted to this aspect of the question in the closing hours of the debate on religious education on the very last day of that session:

"Now we have made it quite clear that we have introduced a system of religious instruction in the schools which is neither final nor in any way put forward as the last

* Debates & Proceedings, 2nd Session, 21st Legislature of the Province of Ontario, March 6, 1945, p.768.

** McLean p.72.

word on this subject. And in the front of every text-book, as those honourable members know who examined them, it is stated that these books are only provisional, and that the Department of Education will welcome suggestions, and that the books will be amended in the light of experience, and the Department of Education has welcomed, and will welcome, any suggestions in regard to anything that might appear to provide any cause of friction or that might possibly be presented in a better way." *

The brief to the Hope Royal Commission submitted in 1945** by the Canadian Jewish Congress pointed out numerous mis-statements of fact, errors in history and invidious distinctions with derogatory comments on other religions. Among the six recommendations made by the Hope Royal Commission was one which read:

"(c) that in any revision of the guide-books in religious education, careful consideration be given to specific items raised by the Canadian Jewish Congress in Brief 46, Appendix I." ***

"In July 1945 a second revision of the Guide for Grade 2 was undertaken. During 1949 the Committee recommended 36 changes in the Grade 3 Guide ... These recommended changes in the text were submitted to the Department of Education in November 1949, but unfortunately were omitted from the next reprinting of the Guide." ****

As recently as 1960, sixteen years after the initial publication, the Ethical Education Association prepared a report on Religious Education in Ontario public schools and listed a sampling of the passages in the guide-books

* Debates & Proceedings March 22, 1945, pp. 2225-6.

** See Appendix K.

*** Report on Royal Commission on Education in Ontario 1950 p. 127

**** McLean p. 45.

deprecating other religions - these were still in the books and had not been removed.*

When in the early 1960's changes were made in some of the manuals they proved to be a disappointment.

By 1964 most of the Teachers' Manuals Grades One to Six had received some amount of revision. At that time we prepared a cursory study of these revised manuals. We do not propose at this time to burden you with the observations we made then which, incidentally, do not purport to be exhaustive, though these are available should you wish to familiarize yourself with them. We shall only touch on a few of the highlights of this analysis in the Appendix.** Of the more blatant discrepancies and disparagements in the old Guides, many (but not all) were deleted. Some attempt (not successful in our view) was made in various passages to approach historical outlines with a degree of fairness and objectivity. Much remains that is objectionable and contains clear bias and distortion both specifically in statement and implicitly in the climate suggested.

We must state most emphatically, however, that we did not make this study of the changes nor do we launch our complaints about the manuals for the purpose of insuring

* A Report on Religious Education in Ontario Public Schools by the Ethical Education Association, March 1960.

** See Appendix C.

that these texts be, as it were, cleansed and that the course, then totally free of objectionable matter, would become acceptable to us. In the nature of things it is our belief that such a goal is not possible. Attempts have been made over the last 20 years to remove from these materials anything that would be considered biased or objectionable and the result is still basically quite unacceptable. We call in particular to your attention the Grade 8 Guide Book "The Seed and the Harvest"* published in 1961 well after most of the criticisms had been made of the previous manuals. This was prepared with these criticisms in mind yet nevertheless contains material which in our view is inaccurate and misleading.

One of the factors that motivate our concern is that these manuals may leave on the young a distorted impression of Judaism. We do not presume to suggest any alteration in Christian doctrine; we acknowledge that religious conviction admits of little modification to satisfy the sensibilities of the non-adherent. Nevertheless, in order to present Judaism fairly in its relation to early Christianity we insist that there is neither justification nor necessity for any suggestion that the former is imperfect or inferior. If this is not in accord with Christian doctrine then we believe we have reinforced our point that such manuals cannot possibly be written to depict different religions in a way which will meet the test of

* See Appendix D.

faith to their adherents - which is one of the very reasons we oppose religious education in the public schools.

PART B. - SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS

CHAPTER IV - SEMANTICS

Proposition 4: Words such as sectarian, non-sectarian or Judaeo-Christian have no fixed meaning but vary in their sense according to the purpose and intent of the user.

The Teachers' Guides and the prescribed Regulations provide that the instruction should be "non-sectarian".* It must be borne in mind that the words "sectarian" and "non-sectarian" differ in import according to the intent of the user. "Non-sectarian" may mean non-sectarian as between various forms of Protestantism, or as within differing branches of Christianity, or as between widely diverse religious beliefs. Which meaning is intended by the Minister of Education? It is clear that in the various booklets and regulations describing the 1944 course, non-sectarian denotes non-sectarian within Protestantism.

One cannot be sure, however, even when studying the background of its use, which connotation of this hyphenated adjective is intended in any given context. It is fair, therefore, to examine carefully what is intended by the use of such terms in the various submissions placed before your Committee. It is clear that these expressions differ in meaning according to the context and speaker.

* Regulations and Programme for Religious Education in the Public Schools, Minister of Education of Ontario, p.10.

Frequent use has been made before you by others of the expression "Judaean-Christian" in regard to what is called the "common heritage" of Jews and Christians. We are often puzzled by the uses of this term. Some, no doubt, intend it to refer to the two religions of Judaism and Christianity, sometimes called sister or twin faiths, sometimes referred to as mother and daughter, but recognized as two distinct religions having perhaps certain similarities based on their common derivation or historical development. Others may characterize as Judaean-Christian those tenets of faith thought to be shared in common by the two religions. We are bound to say, however, that in our view the most frequent use of this term employs "Judaean" as a qualifying adjective describing Christianity in contexts which connote Christianity in Christian terms as being the fulfilment of Judaism as prophesied in the Scriptures according to the Christian interpretation thereof. Jews, of course, do not and cannot in any way accept this position. It is inconsistent with modern Christian religious thinking to deny to Jews the respect of equality in the religious spectrum, and to accord them rather a status of unfulfilled primitivism. In our view the term is ambivalent, since its true meaning in any given circumstance depends on context and interpretation. We caution, respectfully, against its casual employment.

A further difficulty encountered in religious texts is dealt with in an interesting article by The Rev. James Brown, to be found appended as Appendix J.

CHAPTER V - EXEMPTIONS

Proposition 5: Provision for exemption, whether at the instance of the parent, the child, the teacher, the principal, the School Board, or the minister does not meet the basic issue, namely that any instruction in doctrinal religion has no place in the public school.

The exemption provisions* though beneficent in intent and though perhaps expedient in the circumstances, are a thoroughly bad practice.

Any arrangement that sanctions the withdrawal of a six and seven year old child from a classroom while his mates are given instruction in a doctrine that his parents do not share, has no place in a public school. We have in the past urged parents to make use of their right to exempt children - but we have done so knowing that many parents are reluctant to do so. We maintain that no situation should be permitted which puts parents in such a dilemma of conscience.

We are concerned not only for the psychological effects on children who are withdrawn from class and thus are singled out as peculiar non-conformists, but we are equally concerned for the non-conforming child whose parents do not exempt him and who therefore stays on in the class. It is not that we fear proselytization or conversion but we do deplore the consequences that flow

* Regulations and Programme for Religious Education in the Public Schools, Minister of Education of Ontario, pp 6-7.

from the conflict that inevitably arises in the mind of the child between the authority of the teaching of the school and the different religious concepts which he will be taught at home and in his religious institution. The present system too readily gives rise to a serious conflict between the authority of the home and that of the school.

In 1945 in our brief to the Hope Royal Commission we commented on the exemption clause:

"The provision that pupils may be excused from the classroom during religious instruction upon written request of the parent, does not prevent or correct injustice. It subjects the children of a small minority to the embarrassment of excluding themselves from a school exercise in which others are called upon to share. The excluded child may become the object of reproach and suspicion. Such a course tends to destroy that equality of pupils which democratic law seeks to maintain and protect. Some parents, rather than expose their children to the embarrassment of segregation from their fellow pupils, may yield in silence."

Unhappily, experience since that time has corroborated only too well what we anticipated. There have been cases again and again of children being singled out by their school mates and even by their teachers as in some way deviating from the norm. In public schools, established for use without distinction, difference or religious preference by all segments of the population, there can be no justification for such events.

The other exemptions provided contain similar injustices. Teachers are permitted to ask for exemption from giving this instruction. Very few, we understand, take advantage of this. Those teachers, and they may be a majority, who do not regard religious education as desirable in the public schools nevertheless for the most part do give instruction in it thereby compromising their own conscience and compromising the instruction they give. It is wrong to place teachers as well as pupils before this dilemma of conscience.

CHAPTER VI -
THE PROBLEM OF THE KINDERGARTEN

Proposition 6: Religious education creates a special problem in the kindergarten quite different from that which occurs in the other grades and which mars the child's introduction into the public school system.

The "Program and Regulations for Religious Education"* provides:

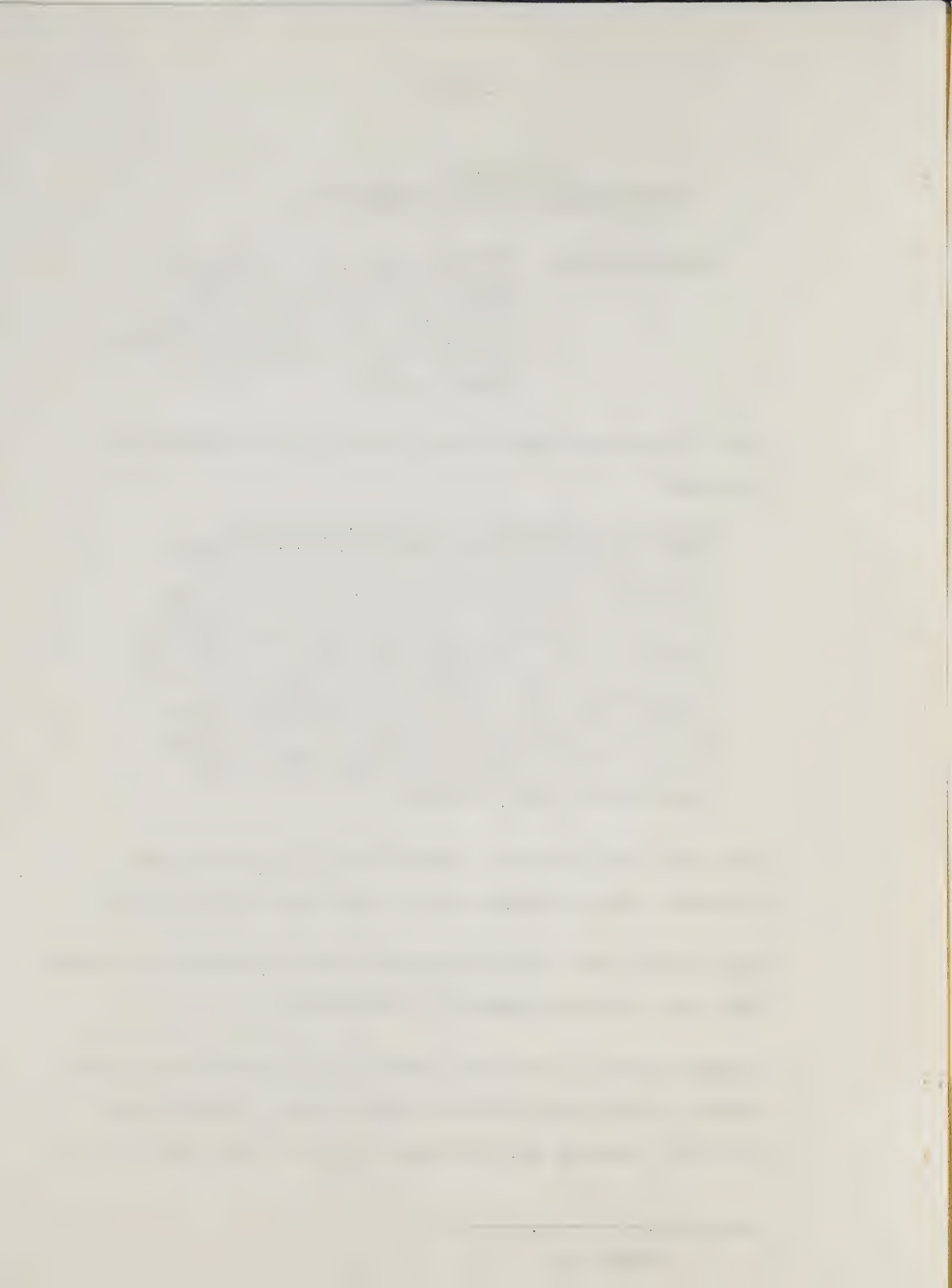
"Religious Education in the Kindergarten
"The child's spiritual education in the early stages depends more on environment and the atmosphere created by the teacher than on the conscious imparting of ideas. In the intimacy of the kindergarten, friendly greetings are exchanged, simple thanksgivings said or sung, and little ceremonies and personal festivals devised to celebrate the children's birthdays, the seasons, and the story of the Christian year. The child's Religious Education at this stage will be associated mainly with these simple actions and the experience they provide of companionship and security."

Too often some teachers concentrate on religious and doctrinal subject-matter to the exclusion of all else.

One example from the Metropolitan Toronto area illustrates what can and does happen in kindergarten:

A Jewish parent found his child coming home from kindergarten singing Christian religious songs. He mentioned it to the teacher who professed that she was unable to do

* page 13.



anything about this and referred the parent to the principal. The interview with the principal was quite fruitless. Unlike most principals, who are anxious to resolve delicate problems as best they can, this principal took an attitude that more or less said: you can like it or lump it. The parent was asked by what right he came into the schools to direct what should be taught; he was told that he had the privilege of sending his child to a Jewish parochial school (quite a gratuitous piece of advice from a public school principal!); and he was advised that he could, if he wished, take his child out of kindergarten since attendance at kindergarten is not required under school regulations.

The most distressing aspect of this problem when it arises in the kindergarten setting is that it gets the relationships between school, parent, child and teacher off on the wrong foot. The parent's first encounter with teacher, principal, and school is one of unsatisfied complaint. The eagerness and zest usual in both parent and child at the beginning of the school career is thus spoiled by the cloud of disquiet and distress caused by this quite gratuitous intrusion of religion into the introductory year.

Many parents, not wishing to place their five year old child in a position of difficulty and tension, do not even undertake to register any complaint. They are reluctant at the beginning of the child's school year to do anything

that might undermine the teacher's image as the embodiment of correctness and authority. However, after weighing all factors in the balance, many parents must protest, and in our view with every justification.

However, even when a parent wished to submit his five year old to the distressing experience of temporary withdrawal from class, how can this be done? The religious element is so fully integrated into the entire fabric of the kindergarten program of song, arts and crafts, and games that exemption is often possible only by complete removal from the class. And this, unfortunately, is what at least one principal recommended.

We remind you that the inability to withdraw one's child from kindergarten classes which may be permeated with religious doctrine is in direct conflict with the spirit of the statute which has been part of Ontario law for more than a hundred years, and which was quoted at the beginning of our brief.

PART C: OPPOSITION TO THE PRESENT COURSE

CHAPTER VII - EXPERIENCE IN TWO COMMUNITIES

Proposition 7: Experience has shown
that even with the ut-
most good will the
course causes friction and ill will.

In North York, a section of Metropolitan Toronto that between 1950 and 1960 developed from a semi-rural area to a huge, burgeoning and populous urban area, religious education in the public school system became a particularly tense problem. We kept in close touch with the many incidents and events that followed closely upon each other and we commend to your attention a special study in how the course in religious education generates tensions and friction.* This township (as it then was) has several large pockets of predominantly Jewish residential areas, as well as many mixed areas, and many predominantly non-Jewish.

In the rural township of Gosfield South in Essex County, a section of southwestern Ontario, there are few, if any, Jews. Events there are known to you both through press stories and through representations which have been made before your Commission; we shall, therefore, not deal with the details of what occurred. What happened, however, again illustrates the thesis that a course in

* See Appendix E

sectarian religion, even when given in an area which may seem to be homogeneous in religious make-up, produces the same results as it does in areas such as North York where there is a more complex religious and ethnic background. It is particularly disturbing that an organization which pursues a particular view of revelation and Bible interpretation - one it is fully entitled to preach and follow - has been successful, because of the way the regulations have been written, in imposing its lay teachers, about whose pedagogical qualifications there may be considerable doubt, upon many Ontario school children.

CHAPTER VIII -
PUBLIC DESIRE FOR CHANGE

-Proposition 8: Public opinion as generally expressed, opposes the present policy of religious education in the public schools.

From the beginning overt opposition to religious education in the public schools has included presentations from numerous groups outside of the Jewish community, groups which ranged over the whole spectrum of religious thinking. A group within conservative Protestantism, including some fundamentalists, felt that religion was too sacred and delicate a subject to be entrusted to secular teachers, some of whom could not be safely charged with the responsibility of teaching the kind of doctrine that would meet their (i.e. fundamentalists') requirements. They felt they could assign the teaching of religion with complete confidence only to their own churches and church schools, for only under conditions over which they had direct control could they be sure of the unassailable purity of their creed. One must respect this point of view; it is logical and consistent and whatever one's own belief may be, this attitude is a reasonable one and deserves full consideration. It is best represented and explained in an article in Maclean's Magazine of January 26, 1963, entitled "A Minister Says: 'Let's Throw the Bible out of the Schools'", where the Rev. Leslie Tarr, a Baptist clergyman and a

self-styled fundamentalist, urges even the discarding of religious exercises and prayers.

At the other end of the spectrum there are religious liberals and humanists. This group considers it to be improper to indoctrinate children in a public school with dogmas, be they theistic or sectarian in any way, which would be in direct conflict with the tenets espoused by their parents.

Nor does opposition stem only, or even mainly, from the "right" and "left" extremes of the religious position. On the contrary, there were in 1945, and to an even greater extent today, numerous groups and individuals in our society, through all the various shadings of religious persuasion, who had and have honest doubts and misgivings about the workability or basic justification of religious education in the public schools; there are others who have opposed it on principle from the start.

Canadian Institute of Public Opinion

In 1957 a Canadian "Gallup Poll" (Canadian Institute of Public Opinion) conducted a Canada-wide questionnaire on religious instruction. The over-all results showed that 50% felt there should be religious teaching in the public schools, 42% felt there should not be, and eight per cent were undecided (a difference of only one per cent since 1944 when the corresponding figures were 50%, 41%, and 9%).

However, when these returns are analysed on the basis of the religious affiliation of those polled, they present a different picture. Among Anglicans, it was 44% in favor of such instruction, 50% opposed and 6% undecided. Among United Church members it was 39% in favor, 54% opposed and 7% undecided. Among all other denominations (other, that is, than Roman Catholic and the two mentioned) it was 41% in favor, 51% opposed and 8% undecided. Roman Catholics favored religious instruction in schools to the extent of 66% while 26% opposed it.

It is legitimate to ask, in the light of this poll, where there is to be found any great majority of Canadians in favor of religious education in public schools. It is clear that of those who support the public school system of education, the majority does not favor religious instruction therein.

But we do not posit our argument on a majority-minority approach. It cannot be said too often that in matters of conscience there is no majority rule. Freedom of conscience is what democracy guarantees to the minority, despite the majority view. However, it is certainly relevant to show that in fact the "majority" which is supposed to favor religious instruction in the public schools actually does not exist.

The Jewish community of this province, speaking through the Canadian Jewish Congress and its community organiza-

tions, of course has made no secret of its feelings. We have, as already indicated, made a number of presentations to the Board of Education of the Township of North York dealing with this problem. At regularly held Ontario regional conferences the matter has been repeatedly considered and invariably the present curriculum has been condemned in formal resolutions. In January 1957 we presented a brief* to the late Hon. Dr. W.D. Dunlop, the Minister of Education, and the Hon. Leslie Frost, then Prime Minister of the Province. In February 1957, we made a submission to a session of secondary school administrators in York Township, a suburb of Toronto, dealing with a proposal to introduce religious education in the secondary schools of that township. The principals of the schools and the administrators, it may be noted, expressed themselves as being opposed to the introduction of such a course in the secondary schools.

In the city of Port Colborne in the 1950's, a Jewish deputation and a member of the local Separate School Board appeared before the Board of Education in opposition to introducing religious education into the public schools of that city. The Board agreed and withdrew the proposal.

The Press

Since the introduction of the 1944 course a substantial and significant portion of the press of Ontario has commented freely both on its substance and on its principle. Many leading newspapers in the province have expressed themselves in opposition to a course of this kind in the

* See Appendix F.

public schools, reflecting the wide-spread discontent it has aroused. They do not confine themselves to merely picking flaws in it but in the main have aligned themselves in principle against such instruction.

On February 10, 1959, the Toronto Star said:

"The time has come for a reappraisal of religious teaching in the schools - not only the methods and provisions for it but even the desirability. It is an increasingly contentious issue ..."

After reviewing what had been happening in Ontario in this field and going back to the historical background, the editorial concluded by saying:

"...Such questions demand almost prayerful examination. The problem weighs on the conscience of many thousands of parents, teachers, clergymen and taxpayers. There should be reappraisal before it is too late."

On April 22, 1964, commenting on the resolution of the Scarborough School Trustees*, the Star stated editorially:

"Wrong in Schools

"At their meeting this week, Scarboro school trustees rightly condemned Ontario's 20-year-old course in religion as unfit for public schools.

"The trustees were clear-sighted in requesting changes in a program they described as 'divisive and proselytizing in nature'.

"In an official letter sent Education Minister William Davis, they suggest that the course be abandoned in the first six grades, substantially altered for Grades 7 and 8, and that it then be taught by specialist teachers, with clergymen excluded. The board proposes that the reformed course for senior grades emphasize the history of major religions as moral and cultural bases of Western civilization.

* See p.62 below

"These measures, if adopted, would certainly be an improvement over the existing course and methods. But it's a pity that the Scarborough trustee couldn't agree to a motion requesting exemption from teaching the course altogether. One trustee called it 'insignificant balderdash'. Another said: 'It is simply wrong to have this kind of intrusion into the public school system'.

"This criticism is fundamental. The course as laid down is Christianity of Protestant bent, and so is discriminatory and even offensive to non-Protestants and non-Christians. Further, no course in religion can be taught to children without giving it, inadvertently perhaps, a sectarian and doctrinal bias.

"For these reasons we believe instruction in religion should have no place in schools which are supposed to be public, for families of every religious belief or none at all.

"Before 1943 and the introduction of the course, Sunday school was supposed to be the place where children received formal religious education. Why not now? The public schools should not be required to do the churches' job, nor can they do it satisfactorily, as a good many Christian parents know who resent the 'intrusion'.

"Mr. Davis should give the Scarborough board's letter careful, even prayerful, heed. If any course in religious history and moral principles is authorized, it should be only for high schools, when students may be expected to have sufficient maturity to distinguish between information and doctrine. And such a course should be optional, like biology."

Other editorials in the Toronto Star on this subject, all of them opposing religious instruction in public schools are as follows:

| | | |
|----------|----------|--------------------------------|
| January | 11, 1961 | "Make Public Schools Secular" |
| October | 17, 1961 | "Teach Knowledge of Religions" |
| November | 22, 1961 | "The Seed and the Harvest" |

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| September 20, 1962 | "New Approach to School Religion" |
| October 4, 1962 | "Will Premier Heed This Plea?" |
| April 22, 1965 | "Religious Knowledge, Not Instruction" |
| May 31, 1965 | "Religion in the Schools" |
| April 26, 1966 | "Religion Has No Place in Our Public Schools" |
| May 5, 1966 | "An Unholy Mess" |

Since 1960 the Toronto Telegram has questioned the course on religious instruction. On March 14, 1960, it expressed its doubts in an editorial entitled "Religion in the Schools". It dealt with the matter again in a similarly titled editorial on March 8, 1961, and again on November 24, 1961, in an editorial "Teaching Religion", and on April 23, 1965, when it greeted the appointment of your Committee. We would like to cite one of its more recent editorial comments from the editorial page of August 29, 1966:

"Christianity In The Schools

"Few would dispute the statement of policy of the Anglican Church of Canada that Christian principle should pervade the public school classroom. Basic to our freedom is the Golden Rule that appeals on the basis of that fine impartiality which we ourselves have profited by and which is of the very essence of a just and equitable life.

"But it is for this very reason that the religious education course in the public schools of Ontario is out of place. The course is concerned with theology on which various Christian denominations differ and which is unacceptable to non-Christians.

"Doctrine interferes with democratic impartiality the public school, by its very nature, must maintain. It touches personal belief that is best sustained and developed in the intimacy of the home and in the warmth of the church.

"The fault in Ontario's religious education course is that it contains interpretive comment that is subject to religious controversy. What our public schools should strive for is Christian motivation rather than Christian textbook material.

"Nobody, whatever his denominational loyalty, objects to this kind of precept and example. It is the foundation on which students are trained to judge fairly, to protect the weak, to value personality for its own sake, to rescue the fallen and even to treat enemies as though they might some day become friends. It is Christian principle in action."

The Toronto Globe & Mail formed its opinion of the existing course somewhat later. On October 4, 1962, commenting on the Sarnia convention resolution of the Ontario Public School Trustees Association it said in an editorial entitled "Impossible Assignment":

"No course of religious education can be produced which will offend none of the children in our schools, which is why religion should be taken out of Ontario's public schools."

On February 23, 1965, its editorial on the subject was headed "Religion in the Schools A Destructive Influence". On May 17, 1965, it commented on Mr. Robert Nixon's speech in the Legislature** under the caption "Ontario's Forced Religion". On May 29, 1965, it reacted to the proposals of the Anglican Diocese of Niagara in an article headed "Enlightened Departure".

Shortly before that, on April 23, 1965, the Globe, under the heading "Time Ontario Returned to Freedom of Religion"

* Legislature of Ontario Debates May 14, 1965, pp. 2932-2935.

said:

"... This newspaper does not believe that an honest assessment of the situation could lead to anything other than abolition, and for a variety of reasons.

"The fundamental reason is that of religious freedom. It hardly seems possible that a committee appointed by Mr. Davis could produce what all the theologians of all the ages have been incapable of producing: a course of religious instruction that offended none of the religions or non-religions represented in Ontario schools. Even if this were achieved, another improbability would ensue. Does there exist one teacher who is so totally objective that he could present such a course of study without introducing some of his own bias, let alone enough of them to staff all Ontario schools?

"So long as any course of religious instruction is given in the schools freedom of religion - one of the basic freedoms of our democratic society - will be breached.

"But there is other damage that results from religion in the schools. Students, school boards and teachers who do not want the instruction prescribed may seek permission to be exempted. But this makes of them aliens in a public school system where all are supposed to be equally at home. This being set apart from his fellows can be emotionally injurious to a child; and it is therefore sound that the committee be composed of laymen whose primary concern is with the well-being of children and not with proselytizing on behalf of one particular religion. There should be no clergymen on the committee, however ecumenical their intentions.

"Canada is a country full of divisions, some of which go so deep as to threaten national unity and many of which are inescapable. It is little short of insanity to introduce further division in the schools, the one place where young Canadians should be able to work and play together and arm themselves with a brotherhood strong enough to withstand the inevitable conflicts of later years.

"It is time for Ontario to return to complete religious freedom, under which all are free to worship or not worship as they choose in their homes and churches, and none is compelled."

Dissatisfaction with the presence of doctrinal religious instruction on the public school curriculum has by no means been confined to the press of Metropolitan Toronto. Newspapers throughout the province have also been sharp in their criticism.

On February 16, 1959, (during Brotherhood Week) the Peterborough Examiner asked "Where is the Option?":

"Social pressures force a child or its parents to accept religious training. No child given the option wishes to separate himself from his fellows in such things unless the counter pressures to do so are strong. Thus religious instruction is not an option and if any child takes the option to refuse it he marks himself off and is immediately exposed to the prejudices which Brotherhood Week seeks to eliminate.

"...The teaching of religion is an intimate business; it is more readily done in the home and at the church than in the public school ...

"...Certainly, teach religion, but if our children are to be precursors of a New World of understanding and tolerance, teach all religions and with them the history of other countries whose destinies, too, have been fashioned by the universal search for the reason of being."

On November 4, 1966, under the title "A Conundrum", in commenting on the brief to your Committee presented by the Peterborough Inter-Church Committee on Religious Education in the Public Schools the same newspaper stated:

"It is admirable that such a diverse group can come to this conclusion for the education of children in the schools, and that it can feel strongly enough about it to make public representations to the Ontario authorities investigating the question.

"It leaves a puzzling question, nonetheless. How can there be so much agreement on this issue, and so little on the question of what should be taught in Sunday schools devoted entirely to religious training? It will be remembered that the Baptists burned a warehouse of books designed by Baptists and United Church clergy and laymen, which was called the 'new curriculum', because the general assembly of Baptists could not agree on its validity. How can the schools offer a program acceptable to all, if the churches cannot agree on what they shall teach themselves?"

On November 18, 1966, under the title "The so-called ethnic minority", after giving the official statistics for Peterborough listing 19 religious denominations and a wide number of countries of origin as provided by the decennial census, the Examiner says:

"The conclusion that we draw from these figures is that it is foolish, hurtful, and racist to argue that 'new and non-Canadians' are responsible for the pressures to deliver the public schools from a denominational religious instruction - even one disguised as the Judaeo-Christian heritage.

"From the list of denominational faiths in the 1961 census it is apparent that there can be no real agreement on Biblical moral training in the public schools, and thus a compromise of some kind must be reached. Comparative religion - or even a course on inter-denominational differences - would make more sense than ritual study of the Bible which, as we have witnessed, can be used to support everything from capital punishment to total abstinence from alcohol, from refusing blood transfusions to supporting (or opposing) birth control. One wonders, sometimes, how children could be expected to make sense of it all, if adults find so much difficulty."

On April 4, 1959, the News-Chronicle of Port Arthur expressed its discontent with the course. While its proposal - that a course acceptable to all faiths be set up - is a debatable one, it expressed the view that while

some religion could be taught in the schools "detailed doctrines are properly the responsibility of home and church".

On January 21, 1961, the Belleville Intelligencer questioned the validity and effectiveness of the course in the public schools in an editorial "A Change in Outlook" saying:

"...Would it not be ironical if it could be proved that this growth of tolerance - or this indifference, depending on the viewpoint - is not in spite of, but because of religious instruction in the schools? Yet this may very easily be true. Surely, some parents who permit their children to be taught a brand of religion which does not fit, in all particulars, with their own personal faith must, from time to time, take steps to offset the instruction given in the schools. Once articles of faith are questioned, a child may learn to doubt even more easily than he may be taught to believe."

Writing in a column in the Evening Review of Niagara Falls, Ontario, The Rev. R.J. Blackwell, an Anglican priest, wrote on October 28, 1961:

"We who are Christians need not worry too much over the growing demand to remove Christian education from the public school system...for it is in the home and the church that the Christian Faith must be and is most effectively imparted to boys and girls..."

"...There is an old saying that the 'Christian Faith is not taught, it is caught'. We are grateful for the opportunity in this free land to speak out for God and Christ in our public schools. But in a free land all we can honestly demand is the right to impart our faith in home and church. Shouldn't we who are Christians concentrate on this?"

The Kingston Whig-Standard from the very beginning of the controversy has taken a forthright position on this issue.

On April 25, 1962, in editorializing on the proposal of the Kitchener Board of Education that "every young person be given the opportunity to develop a knowledge of and respect for all religions and faiths" the Whig-Standard was skeptical as to whether the Kitchener Board was really as "liberal" as this announcement would seem to make it. It went on to say:

"It would be safer, however, to refuse any kind of religious education or training in our free schools. These schools must now serve a variegated population and there are no teachers properly trained to give the children an unbiased critique of the various world religions. The schools are having enough trouble these days teaching them to read and write and do a few sums. Better leave religion out of it."

On March 10, 1966, the Whig-Standard was even more unequivocal in its expression. The editorial reported a panel discussion on the subject that had taken place in Kingston:

"Mr. B--- (a principal of a local school) adopted the standard argument of modern educators when he said that schools should undertake to teach religion to children who come from families which are 'non-committed' in religion. 'As long as we have sheep outside the fold every child should have a chance to hear the work of God as taught in both the Old and New Testament'.

"In the first place it is surely reasonable to ask Mr. B--- what methods he uses in deciding which of the sheep are outside the 'fold'. How does he determine which parents are religiously un-committed? It is also justifiable to ask Mr. B--- what business it is of his whether parents are or are not uncommitted to religion, or to anything else for that matter.

"Public interest suggests that the teaching of religious dogma in the schools will some day be eliminated...and when that happens, it will benefit everybody - even those who are unable to see the benefit."

On May 16, 1966, in commenting on a brief submitted to your Committee, the Whig-Standard reiterated its opposition to religious instruction and went further expressing an adverse view on the teaching of comparative religion:

"...It is nonsense to talk about the teaching of comparative religion to schoolchildren. And of course the Christian faction who want to perpetuate their monopoly don't want any kind of interference with the tacit acceptance of Christian worship in the schools."

The Brantford Expositor, discussing a local survey, said on June 29, 1965:

"As long as religious education remains on the school curriculum it will create controversy. In spite of apparent agreement on the form of study, many churchmen are not happy about compromising their beliefs...Just how welcome would a minister from an 'unfashionable religion', say Jehovah's Witness, be in a classroom? No matter how innoxious (what a word to describe religion!) the instruction given, some parents will never be reconciled to its being taught in school."

On May 5, 1966, Pat Whealen, columnist for the Windsor Star, after first discussing the difficulties that arise from exemption, went on to say:

"A second objection to the present policy is that it is wide open to abuses. Every attempt can be made - and generally is made - to assure that religious teaching, by regular teachers, selected clergymen, or laymen, is not sectarian. Clergymen generally lean over backwards to be fair in such a situation. But is it fair to ask, say, a Baptist minister, to teach religion to a class which may include children whose parents are atheists by conviction? Can he be fair to both his own convictions and to the atheist parents of some of those he is teaching?

"The present Ontario system could lead to a Jewish child, at a very tender age, being taught Christian beliefs which would dismay his parents. It could conceivably lead to a Christian child being taught Jewish beliefs which his parents believe to be incomplete. Both injustices would be done in the name of teaching religion." *

On the following day in a second instalment on "Teaching Religion in the Schools", Mr. Whealen concluded:

"To learn the undisputed facts about religious belief is the right of every person being educated. To teach these facts is the duty of every educational system. Partisan theories - and an article of the faith to one man is only a theory to another - should not be taught in schools which are open to all."

The Stouffville Tribune, a rural weekly, after Mr. Davis announced that the Hon. J. Keiller Mackay would chair this Committee (on June 17, 1965) said:

"We think it is a mistake to try to make public school religious instruction seem to have missionary implications for any particular religion. This can be left to the churches, the Sunday Schools and the homes."

In the London Free Press of June 3, 1966, the regular column "The View from University Hill" by B.B. Kymlicka was devoted to this subject. The title is self-explanatory: "Religious Instruction in Schools Aberration Peculiar to Ontario."

The Times Advertiser of Weston, Ontario, of June 28, 1962, states its views quite unequivocally:

* emphasis the author's

"Religious education should not be a subject in public schools.

"To face facts, the teaching of religious education means the teaching of Christian thoughts and the Christian interpretation of the Bible. 'This is our way, the right way' the pupils are taught.

"While Christianity may be the way of life of the majority of people in this country every law of this land is subjugate to the idea we may practice any religious or political ideals we want. The teaching of Christianity in the schools, where children cannot decide what subjects they want to study, is a transgression of our fundamental ideas of democracy.

"Apart from the fact other children who are not Christians are forced to accept our ideas, or at least listen to them taught as the right and good religious ideas, or to leave the class for the period and lose this precious school time in which so many other strictly academic and universally useful subjects can be taught, this inroad of religion into the sanctuaries of factual knowledge is weakening our system of living."

Personal Views

The Ontario situation has propelled this controversy into the national arena - though it is basically an Ontario question, for nowhere in Canada is the situation the same as it is in this province. On April 25, 1959, the Rev. Reginald Stackhouse, an Anglican clergyman, contributed an article to Maclean's Magazine whose title expresses its thesis quite well: "Schools Should Teach Religion as a Subject not a Faith".

The editor of Saturday Night, Mr. Arnold Edinborough, himself a leading Anglican layman, has in his own publication, in various addresses, and in The Canadian Churchman expressed his distaste for using the public school for

religious instruction.

Numerous prominent editors, clergymen, academics and community leaders of all backgrounds and faiths have expressed themselves in opposition to both the theory and practice of religious instruction in public schools.

Prof. H. Allan Leal when he was Dean of Osgoode Hall Law School, addressed a public meeting at Oakwood Collegiate Institute in Toronto on September 26, 1962, and delivered a discourse entitled "Civil Liberties and Religion in the Public Schools" which, we understand, was provided as an appendix in the brief submitted to your Committee by the Ethical Education Association. A colleague of Mr. Leal, Prof. J. Desmond Morton, then a lecturer at Osgoode Hall Law School aligned himself with the view of Prof. Leal, stating that in his opinion such instruction was illegal as the provinces could not legislate with respect to religion. He also opposed it on grounds of religious discrimination.

Douglas Dadson, Dean of the Ontario College of Education, addressed a zonal conference of the Ontario Urban and Rural School Trustees Association in Pickering, Ontario, in 1957 describing religious education in secondary schools as a "well-intentioned mistake" and as "dangerous".

More than ten years ago W.J. Houston, then Principal of North Toronto Collegiate, included religious education as

one of the unnecessary courses promoted by "certain enthusiasts" who could be called "pestilential".*

On May 14, 1965, Mr. Robert Nixon, M.P.P. from Brant and Liberal Leader, delivered at some length an address on the question of religious instruction in the public schools. Mr. Nixon represents a rural area, is himself a farmer, a school teacher, and a Sunday school teacher. In his speech he expressed his personal opposition to the introduction of religious instruction in the public schools, putting the matter into its proper historical background and context, and presenting the reasons and motivations which we and others have placed before your Committee. We cite a paragraph or two from his speech which takes up more than six columns in the Hansard of the Ontario Legislative Assembly.**

"...On the one hand, it does not do justice to the faith which a good many of us in this Chamber respect so deeply; and, on the other, it is an intrusion into the democratic and civil liberties of the individual parents and the students who are exposed to the programme.

...

"Certainly the aim of the programme is not to proselytize, but to teach Christian morals and ethics. I am quite sure that this can be done by example in the school and in the home, and certainly the main responsibility lies with the Christian church itself in our community."

* Toronto Star, March 6, 1956.

** Legislature of Ontario Debates,
May 14, 1965, p. 2934.

John R. Seely, a well-known sociologist, (he is co-author of Crestwood Heights, was formerly on the staff of the University of Toronto and of York University, and is now with the Institute for Democratic Studies in California) when he was resident of this province was active among those opposing religious education in the public schools. On the 13th of February 1961 he along with Mrs. Donald J. Dodds presented a brief on behalf of the Ethical Education Association to the North York Board of Education which contained a masterful analysis of the destructiveness and disruption created by religious education in the public schools.* The matter was dealt with from the point of view of the child, the school and the community, and we commend this document to your Committee's attention.

Dr. Murray Ross, president of York University and then vice-president of University of Toronto, had the following to say in 1959:

"You know, of course, that there has been both from within the school and from the community pressure to broaden the program of the school to include a whole host of other functions such as social adjustment, religious instruction, traffic safety, and many other irrelevancies. It seems to me that the school should not be asked to take on the function of the home or the church, or the traffic court, or any other such institution."

The views of Charles E. Phillips, retired Dean of Graduate Studies at the Ontario College of Education and author of "The Development of Education in Canada", are, of course,

* See Appendix G.

well known to your Committee. He has not only written and spoken extensively on the subject, but has appeared before you.

C. Wellington Webb, associate professor of philosophy at the University of Toronto, in an article in the Toronto Globe & Mail of May 20, 1966, expressed himself this way:

"...the teaching of religion can never be a simple process of transmitting information. A man may acquire knowledge of any number of supposedly religious facts but be without a genuine religious commitment. If it is desirable to foster religious commitment, it seems likely that this aim can best be served by keeping religious instruction out of the schools."

We mentioned earlier in this submission various clergymen who have written and spoken against religious education in the public schools. May we now add the names of several others: Karl J. Schweder, a Lutheran pastor in Toronto who wrote on the subject in the Willowdale Enterprise of January 9, 1963:

"...Such a course is not one of general information but one of effective persuasion. As a result of this experience I resigned as a teacher of religion in the public schools."

and on January 16, 1963:

"...Can parental failure in this regard really be counteracted through such a programme in the schools?
..... This I doubt very much
..... I have had the conviction that the little time I spent with the children often hindered rather than helped them."

The Rev. Emlyn Davies, formerly president of the Canadian Council of Churches and former president of the Ontario-

Quebec Baptist Convention, has not only expressed his views on national television in a CBC broadcast in January 1963, but has made his own personal presentation before you.

Suburban Teachers

A brief submitted to your Committee earlier by the Male Elementary Public School Teachers of Weston, North York, and Forest Hill showed that of a 95.8% response of an approximate total of 475 teachers queried, the highest proportion, 67.7% wished to have religious education removed from the public schools; 24.8% wanted it continued but in a changed form and curriculum and no more than 7% were satisfied to maintain the course as established.

You are, we know, familiar with their brief. The wide variety of reasons given by these practising classroom teachers to support the removal of such teaching is most impressive. Their brief lists 34 different motivations in support of their position. Their presentation, we submit, is a most significant document, coming as it does from a group many of whom are charged with teaching the course as a matter of daily practical concern.

Statement of 17 Clergymen

In February 1965 a group of clergymen from the Toronto and Hamilton area, most of whom belonged to the "mainstream" Protestant denominations, met to discuss this matter.

They wrestled with the problem for some time; it had given trouble and concern to their conscience. After two meetings they formulated this resolution:

"WE THE UNDERSIGNED, affirm the purpose of the public school system to be education rather than religious indoctrination. The teaching of religion in the public schools as it now exists seeks to encourage 'acceptance of the historical Christian Faith' . (page VIII, Grade One Guide Book)

"WE BELIEVE that the public school system is not the proper place to encourage commitment to any particular system of religious faith, and that religious instruction as it now exists is inadequate and SHOULD CEASE in its present form.

"WE STRONGLY URGE that new approaches to the relationship of religion and education be explored."

Ten of the signers were United Church clergymen, three were Anglican, one was Presbyterian, two were Unitarians, and one was a Buddhist.

Resolutions of Public Bodies

In the 1960's at least four responsible public bodies placed motions on the public record that asked for some answer to the problem. We deem it important to note who these bodies are and what they said; they all express opposition to religious education in the public schools. We do not necessarily agree with everything they recommend.

- a) The North York Board of Education. This Board had undergone a trying period of attempting to resolve this question on the local board and school level. The motion, after an introductory paragraph, reads as follows:

"WHEREAS there has been a great variety of opinion concerning the merit of the present course of religious instruction in our public schools; and
WHEREAS even the strongest supporters of the course have voiced some dissatisfaction with it; and
WHEREAS all reasonable people recognize the contribution of the various religious groups to our moral, cultural and economic well being; and
WHEREAS the need for mutual respect and unity of all religious and non-religious groups is always of concern to our people and our government;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Board appoint a Committee of three trustees to wait upon the Prime Minister of Ontario and the Minister of Education to petition for the setting up of a Committee or Commission to report and recommend on the following:

- "a) how moral, ethical and citizenship values are taught in our public schools;
- "b) how children of all religious groups can be taught respect for their families' beliefs and for the beliefs of other groups;
- "c) the changing role of the family -- privileges as well as responsibilities -- in the teaching of ideals to its members;
- "d) how teachers in training can best be prepared for their roles in teaching moral and ethical values to our children."*

- b) The Scarborough Board of Education. This Board represented a suburban section which, though without any known public controversy and being a relatively homogeneous constituency in terms of religion and ethnic origin, was concerned with the problem. The Scarborough motion, passed on April 20, 1964, reads as follows:

* October 15, 1963, Minutes of Board of Education, North York Township.

"BE IT RESOLVED

- (i) That a letter be written to the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario requesting major revision of the religious education curriculum;
- (ii) That it is the opinion of this Board that the present course in religious education is divisive and proselytizing in nature;
- (iii) That it is this Board's opinion:
 - (a) That a continuation of the present program will continue to fail to assist in the preparation of the young for increased contact with members of other great societies which they are likely to have in adult life;
 - (b) That the present course in religious education should be strengthened to emphasize the cultural and moral base of Western society. Such a course ought to include knowledge of the religious origins of other major cultures.

That this Board suggests:

- (iv) As an outline of a vastly improved course the following:
 - (a) elimination of religious education in grades 1 to 6 inclusive;
 - (b) inclusion of a course in Old Testament, origin and history of Judaism in Grade 7;
 - (c) inclusion of course in New Testament, origins and history of Christianity in Grade 8;
 - (d) other major world religions, origins, history and cultural contributions to Moslem, Hindu and Far Eastern Societies in Grade 9;
- (v) That the teaching of religious education be restricted to specialist teachers in religious education to the exclusion of the Clergy;

- (vi) That the status and privilege of School Visitors, however, should be retained by the Clergy."*
- c) At its annual meeting of 1964 the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations passed the following resolution:
- "THAT the Ontario Department of Education establish a committee of professional educators from various backgrounds representing the fields of child psychology, psychiatry and social work as well as the teaching profession for the purpose of:
- 1) Objectively investigating and evaluating the present course (of religious education) as to its effectiveness in achieving its basic purpose;
 - 2) Considering the most appropriate methods of imparting moral and ethical values to all students whatever may be their religious heritage."
- d) You have already received direct representations from the Cornwall Public School Board opposing the present course.

* Re School Visitors Sec. R.S.O. 1960 chap.330, s.8.

CHAPTER IX -
REASONS IN PRINCIPLE FOR OPPOSITION TO RELIGIOUS
INSTRUCTION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Proposition 9: There are reasons in
principle for opposition
to any course of doctrinal
religious instruction in the public schools.

1. Such instruction under the auspices of the public school system is out of place in our open pluralistic society setting up as it does one preferred or "official" religion, thus by necessary implication relegating others to the level of second class tolerated faiths. Under the best of circumstances, even if every lesson could be presented without either offensive passages or nuances, this position in our view would still be valid.

It has been suggested that in rural communities, where the population is predominantly or exclusively of one religion, we should not, indeed cannot, object to religious instruction in the public schools. We feel strongly otherwise, and we see no reason for any distinction to be made between areas on the basis of alleged religious homogeneity. For one thing, as we have seen in the Gosfield South case, there really is no such thing as a homogeneous area where religion is concerned. In the second place, it is precisely in areas where almost all the population is of one religion that instruction in a recognized or official religion will promote the concept that the faith taught is the first class, "preferred" religion and that all others are in some way secondary and less worthy of respect and attention.

2. The public school system in Ontario must be available to all children on an equal basis in every sense of the meaning of the word "equal". No public funds should be used to provide in the public schools religious education which prefers one faith over another. The moment we deviate from this principle we compromise and endanger the integrity of the public school.

The public school must be open to all, and as we stated in our presentation to the Hall Committee a year ago, the cornerstone of our position on this matter is that we reaffirm our contention that the public school must be regarded as a public institution.

3. Religious instruction in the public schools creates conflicts, tensions, and even hostilities in the one area of our society's common experience - the education of our youth - where every emphasis must be placed upon those areas which do not give rise to animosities and acrimonies. Our files contain many instances of unfortunate consequences of religious instruction and we are persuaded that these are not exceptional cases but are inherent features of any such course.
4. The exemption provision, whether it is or is not used, is by no means an answer to the problem. It sharpens divisions and sets up unwarranted "separatism" within the public school classroom. It places too heavy an onus on parents and children and for teachers

it is unworkable in practice.

- 5..Religious education in the public school detracts from the educational function of religious institutions and, in our opinion, serves to weaken and undermine their strength and influence. The surrogate kind of teaching offered in the public schools is a substitute which by some is regarded as diluted and by others as too intensive and doctrinal. It is often given by teachers who on the one hand may be over-involved emotionally and proselytizing in intent, or on the other may be teaching this course in mere technical compliance with the regulations. Such practices will not likely compensate for the lack of success of the religious institutions and produce truly religiously knowledgeable or oriented students. Many of us who desire to see religion strengthened and grow wish to confine instruction therein to the proper place - the religious institution and the home. Thus the Jewish community with much effort has accepted its responsibility to look after the religious training of its youth through synagogues and special community institutions devoted to this purpose.
6. We oppose religious education in the public schools because it interferes with one of the few remaining prerogatives left to the parent in our society - his right to guide his child in matters of belief about God and the Universe - beliefs which are and must remain private and whose privacy must be considered

sacred, not to be intruded on by state or school.

We are often asked: what of the children whose parents neglect this instruction and guidance?

It is a fallacy to predicate that the school assumes complete responsibility for the total nurture and upbringing of the child; it is not so in our society. Most educators maintain, and we agree, that the basic responsibility for the child remains that of the parents, not the school, and that the education of the child takes place in many ways, both within the family and by means of many other institutions, public and private.

This is not to say that the school does not have a major responsibility for the transmission of the moral and ethical values of our society. Public education has a role in this transmission of culture and ethics and indeed carries it out in many ways. We shall indicate expressly a little later how schools have been doing this and shall suggest further ways in which it can be done.

This, however does not apply to religious inculcation. In our society the religious institution has no right to make use of the facilities of the public school to obtain a conveniently captive audience.

7. As we have stated, we do not posit our argument on the basis of majority or minority. Most polls taken on this matter do not show a majority of public school parents favoring doctrinal instruction in the public school. This is not surprising, in view of the traditional practice in most Canadian provinces of keeping religious instruction out of the school system. We often hear bland assumptions that those who oppose religious education in the schools are only a small minority - a sort of tail wagging the dog argument. Even if it were so (which it is not) matters of religious conscience cannot be decided by a vote, and freedom of conscience is not due only to those in the majority - they indeed are the ones who must protect that freedom for the minority.
8. It is a misnomer to call the Ontario course "religious education". It is not a course in religion but rather in the doctrines of a specific religion. It is intended as a course in "non-sectarian Christianity"* which inevitably must lack acceptance among many various and diverse denominations and creeds, even within the Christian complex. There simply is no way of providing religious instruction in a public school classroom which can in any real way be acceptable to all the faiths represented (or entitled to be represented) in such a classroom.

* see p.30 ante.

CHAPTER X - OTHER PROPOSALS

Proposition 10: Except for those among us who feel that true objectivity cannot be attained, we do not object in principle to courses "about religion or courses in "comparative religion". We recognize that such courses are extremely difficult to devise and teach.

We think it is not enough to ask that the 1944 course be discarded. We respectfully but firmly propose that it not be replaced by anything which in the slightest contains any element of religious indoctrination. There must be no teaching of religion in the public school. The proposals that study be also given to the other faiths all presuppose that the principal emphasis be laid on acquiring a familiarity with the "belief" of the so-called majority. This, we maintain, is not acceptable. No matter how revised or disguised, we believe that such study of necessity must lead to the same abuses which, as we have seen, were a consequence of the 1944 course.

In 1945 after we appeared before the Hope Royal Commission on Education, we heard assurances that with goodwill, good teaching and discretion the curriculum could be made to work despite its imperfections. The predictions we made then were, we regret to say, more than fulfilled by our experience during the 21 years since. All our apprehensions unfortunately were realized - divisiveness, disunity, community tension and unhealthy conflicts.

Comparative Religion Courses

Several briefs have been submitted to your Committee that discuss instruction "about" religion, or an objective study of the major religions of our world such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, etc. This has been proposed as either complementary to or as a viable alternative to the present course, one that does not "indoctrinate", and that is educational in the sense that it will place knowledge before the child or pupil, that it will help him become familiar with the world around him and will assist him in coping with the complex society of the atomic age. Certainly this kind of course, on the face of it, seems to be an improvement over the sectarian instruction we have had heretofore. We would like to examine this proposal somewhat more closely.

In the first place we know of no such course or no jurisdiction which offers such a course in the public school. Secondly, even if acceptable, such a course could not be introduced into the schools tomorrow. Teachers would have to be trained both in the subject matter and in special teaching techniques. Some who have come before your Committee have stipulated that only qualified specialists can be permitted to handle a subject of this delicacy and complexity. Would a course in teachers' college or a summer series be adequate training, or could it be entrusted

only to teachers who had been through a fairly intensive study such as that offered, for example, by McMaster University's Department of Religion?

Thirdly, we must ask at what point during the school years would such a course be offered? Dr. Emlyn Davies, the distinguished Baptist clergyman, suggests that it be given from Grade One up. He is fully cognizant of the need for trained teachers and is willing to wait if necessary. Others prefer that such a course be given only in Grades Seven and Eight. Still others think it advisable not to provide such a course until Grades Twelve or Thirteen, feeling that only then can one assume sufficient maturity on the part of the student to be receptive to such a course and to derive the most benefit from it.

Finally, we question whether even comparative religion can be taught in an objective way. Many have no doubt that it can; many are not so sure.

There are substantial misgivings whether there can be such a thing as "objective" teaching of religion. The Journal of Bible and Religion said in an editorial preface:

"Yet unless sacredness is truly present, essential religion is lost, and the study of religion is robbed of integrity. All professional scholars have their commitments, but however much the scholar in

religion is sold upon freedom of thought, he is very often committed as well to an 'unconditional' which uniquely stands in judgment upon all his commitments, including many of those he is called to explicate academically. The craftsmanship of other academic people is not tied up so intimately to ultimacy of commitment. To identify work in religion as a purely cultural or 'professional' operation is to reduce religion to merely one more aspect of the culture of academia." *

It is being suggested with respect to such a course that it is within the competence and ambit of the public school to promote knowledge about religions in the same way that it promotes knowledge of history, geography, and the social sciences. We feel, however, that such a proposition must be approached with the utmost caution. (Some among us are opposed to such a course altogether). Careful attention would have to be given to the training of teachers, and appropriate courses in content and pedagogical method would have to be devised. Care would also have to be given to the level at which such a course is to be introduced and this would depend upon the degree of training or specialization that will be required of teachers.

We do not agree that such a course should be introduced as a consequent to any course in Christianity extending over the primary grades, using that faith, so to speak, as the introduction to a comparative study of other beliefs.

* Editor: A. Roy Eckhard, Lehigh University
Vol.36, #2, April 1966, p.97.

We are actually in no position to endorse any such course without having a tangible, detailed curriculum before us that can be examined. We cannot baldly state in advance that such a course would be acceptable sight unseen.

Religion Within Other Courses

There is a strong possibility that there already exists within the present curriculum the means of promoting knowledge of religion. The course in history, for instance, is rich with such opportunities. Events and developments such as the Crusades, the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, the Thirty Years War, the English Revolutions of the Seventeenth Century, the Wesleyan revival of the Eighteenth Century - all these provide excellent opportunities for alert, resourceful and informed teachers to provide information and stimulate discussion on how man thinks of God and the Universe and how these beliefs in turn have affected Man. The advance of the Arab-Islamic influence, the exploration of America, the opening-up of Africa and China - all these had religious motivations and implications and all can be used constructively and positively to tell about the religious beliefs that impelled man to conquest, exploration, missionizing, and (regrettably) to war and pillage as well. In this aspect religion, of course, has a valid place in the school curriculum. The social studies course could, we assume, pay some attention to rites and tabus of primitive tribes. The histories of Greece and Rome,

Assyria, Palestine and Egypt are closely related to the worship and cult of their peoples. In British history the conflict between Cavalier and Roundhead, the revolutions of 1649 and 1688, Irish-English relations, cannot be properly interpreted without an understanding of the religious factor and it is in these situations that a skilful and understanding instructor can indicate the force that religion has been as a factor in movements for reform, in the Industrial Revolution, in the emancipation of the slaves, without in any way imposing an ideological or theological straitjacket upon teacher or pupil.

CHAPTER XI -
MORAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES

Proposition 11: Moral and spiritual values
can be presented to pupils
in a public school system
by the use of pedagogical techniques not
requiring religious sanctions.

The booklet entitled "Outline of Courses for Experimental Use" (Intermediate Division) issued by the Ontario Department of Education in 1951, contains in its section under "social studies" the following goals listed under "Aims":

"Attitudes

1. A respect for the people and individuals unprejudiced by qualities of race, colour, class, creed, or national origin.
2. A respect for the decisions of the majority and the points of view of minorities.
3. The recognition that all work that needs to be done is honourable.
4. Recognition of the importance of work which is undertaken for the worker's own satisfaction and enjoyment.
5. A respect for personal and public property and for our natural resources.

"Behavior

1. The practice of acceptable social behavior.
2. The exercise of initiative and the acceptance of responsibility.
3. Participation in community affairs.
4. Co-operation with individuals and groups without regard to nationality, religion, or social position.
5. Reading good books for information.

"Guiding Principles

1. History and geography should be closely linked to show the effect of the cultural and physical environment on man's life. The Guidance Programme should show the pupils how the knowledge gained can be applied to their own conduct.
2. Citizenship is not a subject to be taught but a spirit to be engendered. Social Studies provides many opportunities for arranging activities which develop the qualities of good citizenship.
3. Facts are important to the pupils when they enable them to explain events, understand their environment, and bring the past and present to life. Facts should be organized so that there is a natural growth from knowledge which is fragmentary and accidental to knowledge which is unified and meaningful."

By way of preamble the manual states:

"SOCIAL STUDIES

"Social Studies is the study of man in relationship to this environment and to other people. This central theme embraces in one subject the history, geography, civics, and guidance. If this theme is emphasized, the unity of the course will be preserved, although at times the specific material and objectives may belong to only one of its branches.

"Social Studies should help the pupils to understand and to improve the democratic way of life. At present our material progress has outstripped our social development. We must define and meet our responsibilities to society more effectively if we are to live on good terms with our fellow men." (p.58)

The Department of Education, it seems to us, has already set its goals for the inculcation of ethical and moral behavior without the invoking of religious sanctions.

It may well be that we need not search beyond these existing guides and manuals, for this list of aims appears to us to meet the legitimate desires and goals for educa-

tion in this vital area. If our schools were to succeed in implanting the attitudes and fostering the behavior suggested, the whole community would echo a resounding Amen!

We know, of course, that the school has at times fallen short of these goals but within our teacher training institutions we should be able to find the techniques, the resource and the method that can bring the classroom closer to the realization of these aims.

We should like to refer now to certain methods developed in other jurisdictions for the purpose of developing both the awareness and fulfilment of moral and ethical values. We recommend to you a study of the writings of William Clayton Bower*, Ellis Hartford** and J.Mansir Tydings*** who have been successfully identified with this form of teaching and with workshops for teachers in the State of Kentucky.

In common with the Ontario program, the plan in Kentucky adopts the responsibility of the public school for the moral and spiritual development of its young.

The key feature of the program is emphasis. There is no prescribed curriculum and no specific allocation of time.

* Moral and Spiritual Values in Education,
University of Kentucky Press, 1952, Lexington, Ky.

** Moral Values in Public Education,
Harper Bros., New York 1958.

*** Kentucky Pioneers (reprinted from
"Religious Education" 1956).

It is interesting to contrast this with the present Ontario system which has set up a specific curriculum and has designated certain periods for religious study.

The plan works on the principle that moral values can be discovered and learned out of everyday normal experience. The school is a going community. Pupils and teachers must work together. Such a living situation cannot help but yield unlimited opportunity for the acquisition of moral values.

According to its exponents, this method is far more effective in developing spiritual character than is an artificially concocted curriculum.

It is obvious that the system requires a particular trait from its teachers - sensitivity. It is up to the teacher. He must be sensitive to the value potential of each situation he encounters. Be it a behavior problem, a literature lesson, a counselling situation, an athletic program, the teacher must be alert to potential inherent value.

Moral values are learned inductively from situation to situation rather than deductively from formal lessons or instruction. The teacher deliberately makes his students conscious of value conflicts and the problem of choice.

In such a context there is no need for theological conceptualism. There are enough values which we all hold in common, e.g. courtesy, the Golden Rule, kindness, neatness, etc. We would not need to be concerned with differences of opinion among religious groups.

Experience in Kentucky has effectively shown that it is possible to teach moral values in a public school setting with no reference to doctrinal ideology. It is to be noted that the plan began first as an experiment in a few pilot schools. Each year of the experiment recorded significant progress to the delight of the educational authorities. According to Ellis Hartford, community enthusiasm has grown by leaps and bounds over the years. Ambitious teacher training workshops have been established all over the State. More and more classes have joined the movement since its inception about 15 years ago. This is evidence that the plan is working with great success.*

We also would recommend for your examination a Study Guide entitled "Moral Values and Education: the Responsibility of the Public Schools"*** prepared by the American Jewish Congress which contains an interesting and instructive analysis of this plan for imparting moral values in a public school setting.

* See Appendix H

** See Appendix I

CONCLUSIONS

We summarize our submission as follows:

1. The history of public education in Ontario reveals that until the 1940's the Department of Education consistently rejected any proposal to bring religious teaching into the structure of our public school system. It was not part of the tradition or the accepted practice, nor was it permitted by the regulations.
2. We submit that the 1944 innovation was a serious error not consistent with the maintenance of a true public school system, and we strongly urge its removal.
3. We do not suggest that this removal should be contingent on the introduction of a new course to replace it. Our position is categorical; the present course should go. We cannot be expected to endorse any new course or alternatives in advance. We certainly would oppose any course that contains teaching for commitment or which could lend itself to such use or misuse.
4. There is ample opportunity to impart information about religions within the existing courses of literature, social studies, art, music, etc.

5. Objective teaching about religion or religions is by no means suitable for the junior grades. We feel this whole matter must be approached with the utmost caution for experience has not yet shown that full objectivity can be attained in this kind of instruction. Some of us feel in theory that it is possible; others disagree.
6. Teachers, properly trained, can make use of both curricular information and classroom context to impart lessons in moral and ethical values without recourse to theological criteria or sanctions.

** ** **

Honourable Sir, and Members of the Committee: we feel your Committee has an onerous but extremely vital assignment. We have given this matter much serious thought and appraisal, having confronted it on a continuing basis for 22 years. We trust our submission will be of some help to you in your deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,

Meyer W. Gasner,
Chairman,
Canadian Jewish Congress,
Central Region.

Sydney M. Harris, Q.C.,
Vice-Chairman,
Canadian Jewish Congress,
Central Region.

J.S. Midanik,
Chairman, Joint
Community Relations
Committee, Canadian
Jewish Congress
and B'nai B'rith,
Central Region.

Toronto,
February 10, 1967.

APPENDIX A

FROM: Daily Mail and Empire
June 12, 1897.

THE JEWS OBJECT



Do Not Wish to Have Religion in Schools

A Deputation Visits the Management Committee and Presents a Petition -
The Mayor and Ald. Shaw Also Present - The Schools to Participate in the
Civic Jubilee Celebration.

- - - - -

The Management Committee of the Public School Board, which convened yesterday afternoon, with Mr. J.K.L. Starr presiding, had a little more than routine business to deal with. After the minutes had been read a deputation of the Jews of the city, led by Rev. Mr. Lazarus, introduced itself with a petition against the introducing of religion into the Public Schools.

The petition, which was read by Rev. Mr. Lazarus, was as follows:

It having been brought to our attention that you have been appointed to decide today the question of the introduction of religion into the schools, which was urged by certain Anglican clergymen before the trustees, at the last meeting of the board, we the undersigned, on behalf of and representing the Jews of Toronto take this opportunity of stating that we view with the utmost disfavour the proposal to make any innovations in this direction. To our minds, the scheme that has been laid before you is in the last degree ill-advised, inexpedient, and objectionable, and ought not to be entertained for a single moment. Though we feel confident that our interests are safe in your hands, and that you will not accede to a request the effect of granting which would be to encroach upon our rights and liberties, we have deemed it prudent to embody in a statement the following specific reasons, among others, why the demand ought not to be conceded:

1. If the suggested change were introduced, it would not only tend to impart a sectarian bias to the character of the teaching given in the schools (which is in itself a most undesirable thing, since the teaching afforded in them should be of such a nature as to hurt the susceptibilities of none, and admit of all children participating in it without detriment to their cherished convictions and beliefs), but it would strike a severe and perhaps an irremediable blow at the very root-principle underlying the institution of the Public School, which is that it should devote itself to the task of educating the citizen, irrespective of denomination, faith or creed, and treat all who seek its advantages on a basis of equality, without any reference whatsoever to religion. To admit religion into the schools is to contradict the national purpose of such institutions - to make them serve private interests, and to convert them into what they were never intended to be - church annexes and State-subsventioned mission-

houses. For, according to modern ideas, it is the business of the State to look after the material welfare of its citizens, and not to save their souls. It is for it to further their interests and happiness in this world, and to give over into their own hands the looking after their interests and happiness in the next. Church and State must be kept apart, Politics and religion cannot run in harness together. The objects and aims of the two are dissimilar - they have entirely different spheres of action and move on different planes. A man's belief is, no doubt, a very important factor; as long, however, as it does not interfere with his morality, it is his own private affair, which the State has no right to pry into. It is a thing which rests between himself and his God. For the State to intermeddle with religion, for it to attempt to decide the spiritual destiny of its citizens, for it to endeavour to enter into a question of heart and conscience, which are for the holy of holies of a man's heart, is to trespass on a domain wherein it has no jurisdiction. All that the Government has a right to do is to see that those who live under its protection conduct themselves uprightly and honestly, and to adopt measures to this end. Upon all plans and forms of salvation, upon all shades of doctrine, it must look with impartial eye; it must, with regard to them, adopt a neutral position, identifying itself with all, yet with none, only taking care that the peace is kept, and that the rights of all are recognized and safeguarded. As soon as the State departs from this unbiassed attitude, as soon as it recognizes one form of religion more than another, it foresakes its true functions and becomes one-sided and oppressive. We have only to read history to see what horrors have been produced through the marriage of the ill-matched couple, Church and State. Under the name of religion governments have perpetuated all sorts of crimes. They have countenanced Spanish Inquisitions, Bartholomew massacres, and Smithfield burnings. Never has any good come out of the union of Church and State.

Only when they have been divorced have men learned to live together in harmony. Religious liberty is, in fact, the most precious possession that has been acquired by us in these modern times. Oceans of blood have been shed to secure it. Upon its altar thousands upon thousands of noble men and women have willingly sacrificed themselves. To obtain this priceless boon for humanity hosts of martyrs have perished at the stake, or have been done to death on the executioner's block. To allow religion to be introduced into the schools is to undo the glorious work achieved by past efforts; it is to yield up, in one moment, all the fruits of the victory which has been purchased at the cost of so much pain and suffering. It is to set back the hand of the dial-plate of progress. It is to make a possible return to the conditions which obtained in the days of the rack and thumbscrew and the torture-chamber. Religion in the schools we consider the thin end of the wedge. It is a retrograde step, which cannot fail to lead to trouble. It will open the door to all kinds of abuse and evils. If once the ferule of the school-master is allowed to be ousted by the cassock of the minister, there cannot fail to come again, sooner or later, those ages of bigotry, intolerance, and persecution which have left a foul stain on the fair face of civilization, and supply the darkest chapters in the annals of mankind.

2. Under the present arrangements, which seem to work very well, ministers of religion, though they have not in many cases used their privileges, have the right to give religious instruction, after school hours, to the children. If, as suggested, a half-hour for religion were to be substituted in place of something in the morning or afternoon session, this would involve injustice on both sides.

If those who did not wish to participate were sent away, they would be deprived of a half-hour of secular instruction which they have a claim to, and if they were given other lessons during the half hour, they would be having an undue advantage over those whose time was being taken by the minister.

3. Jewish children who attend the Public Schools do not wish to be differentiated from their fellow-pupils. They have no wish to draw upon themselves unnecessary attention, nor do they like to be looked upon, or to be singled out from the general body as if they were inferior to the rest. There is no doubt, whatsoever, that the proposed change will be just the very thing that would tend to produce this extremely disagreeable state of affairs. It would result in splitting up the children of every school into sects, it would breed within them clannish feelings instead of fostering in their hearts a spirit of unity, brotherhood, a common patriotism, and public spirit. Instead of helping to blow and smooth over all differences it would tend to emphasize them. In the schools we would have reproduced on a small scale the sectarian bickerings and strife which characterize religionists in the great school of the world outside. In all probability we should have the Anglican children playing in one corner of the playground, the Presbyterian lads in another, the Methodist in another, and the Baptist pupils in another, whilst the Jewish children, like their forefathers, driven from all society with their fellows, would have to wander around from post to post with no corner of the playground to amuse themselves in at all.

4. If religious instruction were to be introduced into the Public Schools, the effect of the innovation would be to defeat the very object which it was intended to serve, for it would result in depleting the Sabbath schools. Parents would argue that if the Government looks after spiritual welfare of the children they need not. Having had the benefits of religious training during the week, the children would have an additional excuse for staying away from the churches and the Sabbath school on Sunday.

5. In the city there are over 180 churches, to each of which there is attached one Sabbath school. If, with all these institutions, the children of a city cannot be made religious enough, the reason can only be that the ministers are not doing their work properly. They are neglecting to duly utilize their opportunities, in which case they have themselves to blame.

Unlike the Roman Catholic minority we Jews do not maintain, demand, or wish for Separate schools. As far as possible we try to unite in harmony and in hand with our fellow-citizens in the interests of education, enlightenment, and culture, and endeavour to obliterate any superfluous distinctions between

ourselves and those amongst whom we live. If religion were to be introduced into the Public Schools, however, we should be forced in self-defence, and in order to save our children the inconvenience which would be caused them by the proposed legislation, to petition the Government to give us the same privileges as our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, who have ever so much less reason than we for their action, since they represent only a variant form of Christianity, whilst we are professors of a totally different faith. This would mean the erection of Separate schools for us; also it would necessitate immense outlay on the part of the School Board, and make it impossible for its trustees to keep down expenses. After a time it would probably lead to Separate schools for each denomination. The Manitoba difficulty would be transplanted to Toronto. If the churches would put more work into the Sabbath schools, the cause of religion, which is as dear to us as it is to them, would be upheld.

We Jews open our Sabbath schools on Wednesday afternoons from 4:30 to 5:30, in addition to Saturdays and Sundays, because we recognize the necessity of religious instruction for our children. Why cannot the church follow the example of the synagogue in this respect, considering that it has better facilities than we have?

In conclusion we beg to say that whilst we cordially agree with the clergymen who spoke before the trustees last Thursday as to the overwhelming importance of religious instruction as a factor of education, we join issue with them on the means they propose to adopt toward securing the better attention being paid to it. We consider that the churches if they made good use of their present opportunities are quite equal to the occasion.

Signed:- A. Lazarus, Minister, Toronto Hebrew Congregation Holy Blossom.
Alfred W. Benjamin, President, Toronto Hebrew Congregation Holy Blossom
Edmund Scheuer, Superintendent, Holy Blossom Sunday School.

APPENDIX B - REGULATIONS

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Religious Exercises and Religious and Moral Instruction in the
Public Schools

13.-(1)(a) Every Public School shall be opened with the reading of the Scriptures and the repeating of the Lord's Prayer, and shall be closed with the Lord's Prayer or the prayer authorized by the Department; but no pupil shall be required to take part in any religious exercises objected to by his parent or guardian.

(b)(1) In schools without suitable waiting-rooms or other similar accommodation, if the parent or guardian demands the withdrawal of a pupil while the religious exercises are being held, such demand shall be complied with, and the reading of the Scriptures shall be deferred in inclement weather until the closing.

(1i) To secure the observance of this regulation, the teacher, before commencing a religious exercise, shall allow the necessary interval to elapse, during which the children or wards of those who have signified their objection thereto may retire.

(c) If the parent or guardian objects to his child or ward taking part in the religious exercises, but directs that he shall remain in the school-room during these religious exercises, the teacher shall permit him to do so, provided that he maintains decorous behaviour during the exercises.

(d) If, in virtue of his right to be absent from the religious exercises, any pupil does not enter the school-room in the morning till the close of the time allowed for religious exercises, such absence shall not be treated as an offence against the rules of the school.

(e) When a teacher claims to have conscientious scruples in regard to opening or closing school as herein prescribed, he shall notify the Board to that effect in writing; and it shall then be the duty of the Board to make such provisions as it may deem expedient for the carrying out of the requirements of (1)(a) above.

(2)(a) The Scriptures shall be read daily and systematically. The parts to be read may be taken from the book of selections adopted by the Department for that purpose, or from the Bible, or from the list of the Selected Scripture Readings of the International Sunday School Association, as the Board by resolution may direct.

(b) The Board may also order by resolution the reading of such parts by both pupils and teachers daily at the closing of the school, and in addition, the repeating of the Ten Commandments at least once a week, and the memorization of passages selected by the Principal from the Bible.

(c) If the Board does not pass the resolution provided for in (a) above, the teacher shall make the selection himself after duly notifying the Board of his intention, but such selection shall be subject to revision by the Board at any time.

(3)(a)(1) A clergyman of any denomination shall have the right, and it shall be lawful for the Board to allow him, to give religious instructions to the pupils of his own denomination, in each school-house, at least once a week, before the hour of opening the school in the morning or after the hour of closing the school in the afternoon.

(11) Under the same conditions, a clergyman, selected by the clergymen of any number of denominations, shall also have the right to give religious instruction to the pupils belonging to such denominations.

(b) If the clergymen of more than one denomination apply to give religious instruction in the same school-house where the number of class-rooms is insufficient for all at the same time, the Board shall decide on what day of the week a class-room shall be at the disposal of each, at the time above stated.

(4) Emblems of a denominational character shall not be exhibited in a Public School during regular school hours.

The National Anthem in the Public and Separate Schools

14. In every Public and Separate School, the singing of the National Anthem as authorized by the Department shall form part of the daily opening or closing exercises.

APPENDIX - C

SOME CRITICISMS OF THE REVISED TEACHERS' MANUALS

In the Grade 2 Manual* on page 102 the text states that "the Jewish law taught love for one's neighbour, but recognized no member of another race or tongue as such". This is quite inaccurate; the law that taught love of "aliens living in their midst" meant exactly what it said, and Gentiles and Samaritans were not excluded. The authors of the Manual fail to point out that the ideal of brotherly love and harmony between nations was first promulgated by the Old Testament Jewish prophets and by Jewish law.

In the Grade 4 Manual**, page 30, line 34 the following appears:

"The Jewish rulers were in despair. Every day they had tried to trap Jesus as He taught them in the Temple in vain. After much plotting they saw no way of getting Him into their clutches unknown to the crowd of His admirers. They had already decided that He should be condemned to death but that would have to wait until after the Feast."

Likewise in the Grade 6 Manual***, page 40 line 15 there is this phrase:

"... the rulers, bent on revenge ..."

The blatantly offensive words such as "the Jewish rulers bent on murder" have been deleted****. However, the change is hardly an improvement, for the whole spirit of the passage is unchanged: it remains a picture of a group of evil and diabolical persons (who are the Jewish rulers) plotting and scheming to get Jesus "into their clutches", "trap Him" and kill Him.

In the Grade 4 Manual** on page 87 (and elsewhere) the manual writer follows a common error. When referring to Jesus' friends or disciples they are individualized by sex, occupation or name - "women", "Martha", "James", "Peter", "the fishermen", or referred to by a generalized term that gives no indication of their origin: "sinners", "publicans", "the throngs" who greeted Jesus in Jerusalem, etc. However, when referring to Jesus' opponents they are always given descriptive names identifying them as Jews: "the Jewish rulers", "the Jews", "the Pharisees" (though Jesus had much in

* Ryerson Press, Toronto (revised) 1962.

** Ryerson Press, Toronto (revised) 1962.

*** Ryerson Press, Toronto (revised) 1963.

**** These appeared in the earlier Guide.

common with the Pharisees and some Pharisees were among his followers). What is here lost sight of is that all were Jews, both opponents and followers alike. This subject is dealt with by the Rev. James Brown, an Anglican priest formerly at Bishop's College, Lennoxville, Quebec, in an article in "Commentary" of December 1957*.

In various places, the origins of certain doctrines which originated in the Hebrew Scriptures and which are repeated in the New Testament, are not mentioned. In fact, in the Grade 5 Manual** on page 85 the Old and New Testament are compared to the disparagement of the former. The Ten Commandments, incidentally, are mentioned only once in all six manuals. In describing the study of Jewish customs and the Synagogue of Jesus' time there are five proposed programs recommended to teachers. Though the prayer service of contemporary traditional synagogues still bears basic similarities to those of 2000 years ago, no suggestion is made among these programs that a local synagogue be visited.

Old Testament stories are not described as such, but rather as stories told to Jesus as a boy. No acknowledgement is made of any of the recent research on the Pharisees and their place in Jewish history and they are still presented in the image of the puritanical hypocrites without any attempt to represent them in historical perspective.

As stated these are but a few of the observations on the revised manuals, observations which indicate that while not as offensive as the original appearance in 1944, they still contain misstatements and biased commentary.

* See Appendix J.

** Ryerson Press, Toronto (revised) 1961.

APPENDIX D -

A CRITIQUE OF "THE SEED AND THE HARVEST"

It is impossible to come away from a reading of the current grade eight manual "The Seed and the Harvest"* without being vividly impressed by the fact that in the view of its author Judaism, as a religion, is harsh and inhumane; and that by its very principles it is committed to a doctrine of religious bigotry. Criticisms of similar texts in the past have brought about revisions, but the very fact that these revisions are unsatisfactory demonstrates that the task assigned to their authors is an impossible one.

In a society that takes pride in the fact that many conflicting religious beliefs can co-exist in harmony, these texts have the burden of presenting a public belief that is common to all and offensive to none. The result is a watered down version of what the separate denominations actually believe. Jesus is shown to be a saintly man who advocates loving kindness, tolerance and forgiveness. These are certainly values that are shared not only by the various Christian denominations, but by Jews, and for that matter, by atheists as well. The problem arises because the author is attempting to demonstrate that these beliefs are confined to Christianity.

Jesus is shown historically to be a man in conflict with his contemporaries; but the complex historical and theological issues between Judaism and Christianity evaporate in a text which is already committed to a highly simplified presentation of Christian belief. The result is that official Judaism is shown not to believe in the above-mentioned virtues. The issue between both religions is presented as a conflict between the force of tolerance represented by Jesus and the forces of bigotry represented especially by the Pharisees.

The author of "The Seed and the Harvest" is clearly aware of these difficulties. It is a recent text (published in 1961) and was written with the intention of eliminating what was offensive in previous texts. The author stresses that it is non-sectarian in character. In the introduction we are told that "the opposition of the Pharisees should not be viewed as a struggle between the advocates of the Jewish and Christian faiths as they now exist, but rather a protest of conservative religious leaders against the introduction of new ideas into their faith". In this statement the author gives himself licence to deal with the material as though he was writing a simple morality play. This is doubtless necessary for the sake of presenting moral lessons to school children. But he is not dealing with mythical characters and mythical situations; he is dealing with history, specifically with the historical person of Jesus in his historical milieu. What emerges is a caricature of Judaism, and a distortion of Jewish belief.

* Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1961.

The distinction between history and morality play cannot be maintained, and the result is that our school children are presented with the antisemitic archetypes which have haunted Western literature for two millennia.

Throughout the text, the world of Jesus is described in very simplistic terms. It is peopled with three groups, the Zealots, described as "fanatics", (page 15); the Sadducees, described in the text as "quislings", (page 15); and the Pharisees, described in the text as "religious puritans", (page 2), "self-righteous", (page 33) who practice "outward artificial ceremonies", (page 32). These are perfect caricatures for a morality drama, but here they emerge as the authentic representatives of Judaism.

For example, in Lesson 6, entitled "Tax Gatherers and Sinners" a conflict is presented between Jesus and a Pharisee. At issue is Jesus' willingness to share a meal with a hated tax-gatherer named Levi. The Pharisee is appalled that Jesus is willing to be friendly with a representative of Roman oppression. The moral of the story is that the man had repented and Jesus was willing to extend forgiveness, while the Pharisee was not. The attitude of the Pharisee, however, is not merely the attitude of one rather pompous and inflexible individual; his behaviour is represented as typical of the Pharisees. "The Pharisees would apply the term virtuous to themselves, but Jesus looked upon their self-righteousness as an outer shell which isolated them from their fellow man", (page 33). More to the point, the Pharisee was acting in accordance with Pharisaic doctrine; "the term sinner was used somewhat differently from the manner in which it is used today. It was applied not as frequently to those who had broken God's moral laws as it was to the Jews who had become careless in their observance of the rules and regulation" (page 32). No comment is necessary on the latter statement; it is simply false.

In other sections tolerance of Christianity is compared with the exclusiveness of Judaism. We are told that it is Jesus who taught that God's love reaches all men. The Jews, one would assume, had no such belief. This is demonstrated on the section on exclusiveness, (page 113ff). The section begins with the statement "the antipathy of the Jews to Gentiles was an attitude which originated early in Hebrew history", (page 113). In these pages the exclusiveness of Israel clearly emerges as the dominant motif of Jewish history. "Since the apostles were devout Jews who had grown up in this atmosphere of social and religious discrimination, it is not surprising that they were slow in absorbing the tolerant attitude displayed by Jesus". (page 11a)

This whole historical section makes the point that the fundamental shift from Judaism to Christianity was a shift from narrow-minded parochialism and bigotry to cosmopolitan humaneness and tolerance. Every responsible scholar of both Judaism and Christianity would certainly reject this interpretation. This section tells us nothing of the universalism that is part and parcel of the prophetic and rabbinic teaching. Certainly the chosenness of Israel was an important part of Biblical belief. Because of it the Jews refused to accept the paganism of the neighbouring cultures. Christianity, however, was exclusive in precisely the same sense.

In Chapter II of the book "The Call to a Life of Service" Judaism takes on an even more sinister appearance. We are told that the Jews of this time were waiting for a leader who would liberate them from their Roman masters. Jesus rejects this role in favor of a gospel of pacifism. In the passage immediately following entitled "For Further Discussion", (page 14) the students are asked to "name some of the historical figures who tried to conquer large parts of the earth's population by military force". By inference and innuendos, the alternative to the pacifism of Jesus is an imperialistic gospel of force. The Jews were awaiting not a George Washington, but a Genghis Khan.

No modern historians, Christian or Jewish, would accept this caricature as an accurate account of the New Testament Period. Today, many Christian scholars freely admit that the picture of the Pharisees presented in the New Testament is polemical and not consistent with what is known of them from their own writings. It is also known through recent discoveries, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, that this was a period of religious ferment, where many messianic sects made their claims on the Jewish people. Some of them were saintly and ascetic, others were more worldly. The claim that the only alternatives to the Christians open to the Jews was a host of religious bigots and fanatics, is quite inaccurate.

These distortions are the inevitable result of combining a desire to implant simple moral beliefs and commitments with a desire to give an objective account of a complex era in human history. The education of a new generation of Canadians is not served well if one faith is advocated only by distorting another.

APPENDIX E - THE NORTH YORK EXPERIENCE

North York provides a case study of public school religious instruction in action. From the introduction of the Religious Education Regulations in 1944, the schools in North York have given the course more or less in compliance with the legal requirement. For years, an atmosphere of complacent peace prevailed. However, events from 1960 on exposed deep community tensions and generated bitter political controversy.

Until 1960, only some 80 odd pupils in all of North York* had been officially exempted from religious education classes. In the spring of 1960, 460 exemption requests were mailed to the principal of a heavily Jewish populated school, Wilmington**. Out of a total school population of a little over 1,000, 460 exemptions would obviously create problems of administration for Wilmington school officials.

In an effort to work out these administrative problems, Dr. Frederick Minkler, North York Director of Education, called together a small group of the parents responsible for collecting the exemptions together with advisors from the Canadian Jewish Congress. The Canadian Jewish Congress and the parents urged Dr. Minkler to prevail upon the Board to apply for the exemption of the entire school from the Religious Education program. Dr. Minkler, in return, argued that it would be more advisable to work out a solution which offered greater hope of finding acceptance in other parts of the Township. He maintained that these parents should not press their position in an area where there was a Jewish majority to the detriment of the Jewish minorities elsewhere in North York.

* the public school population at the time was 42,513.

** These 460 individual exemption requests were gathered by a group of parents who went from door-to-door throughout the Wilmington School neighbourhood. The parents, opponents of the religious education program, were reluctant to exempt their own children in an atmosphere where they might be singled out as different from their classmates. To overcome this problem, they persuaded other parents to do likewise. The result was 460 exemption requests being mailed to the school at one time.

Although the representatives of the Canadian Jewish Congress and most of the parents who attended this meeting took the strong position that they favoured only the total exemption solution, the Director of Education would not agree to this. The farthest he would go was to agree that the course would be given at 3:30 p.m. and the Board would institute a "double option" form for all parents at the school to answer. The "double option" form departed from the prevailing practice of requiring only the dissenters to indicate their desire for exemption of their children. Under the "double option" form the onus of stating one's position applied to both supporters and opponents of religious instruction equally in that it required those who wanted their children to take the course so to indicate as well as those who did not want it. The 3:30 time provided the advantage to dissenters that they could withdraw from the class less conspicuously since 3:30 was the usual departure hour.

The parents agreed to this compromise on the basis that it was designed as a pilot experiment for eventual extension throughout the rest of the Township. Dr. Minkler promised the introduction of this "3:30 Plan" as it came to be known, in Wilmington Public School and its neighbour Cedar Grove.

Somewhere around this time, the North York Board of Education empowered the Director of Education to make similar arrangements in any school where in his judgment "instruction in Religious Education may be disrupting the operation of a public school in North York".* Following the adoption of this policy, small groups of parents from schools with large Jewish populations appeared informally in the offices of Dr. Minkler and requested the extension of the "3:30 Plan" in their schools as well. Accordingly, without any further evidence of disruption as had taken place at Wilmington, Dr. Minkler granted the "3:30 Plan" with "double option" form in Glen Park, Glen Rush, and Saranac Boulevard public school.

In an effort to arrive at a more coherent policy, the Board convened a special meeting in February 1961. Any person interested was invited to present his views. The result was a stormy, crowded meeting with a barrage of briefs and a battalion of newspaper, radio and television reporters. The North York Ministerial Association, the Christian Women's Council on Education, and two lawyers presented briefs affirming their general support of the existing religious instruction. The Canadian Jewish Congress, the Ethical Education Association, and the First Unitarian Church, called for the total exemption of North York. The North York Home and School Council urged the universal extension

* Board of Education for the Township of North York minutes for the year 1959, page 177.

of the "3:30 Plan". In the result, no majority could be found for a new policy. The existing policy was confirmed, namely that of giving the Director the power to change the hour of the instruction and to introduce a "double option" form if he thought that religious instruction was creating disruption.

Having been unable to effect a change in policy, those dissatisfied with the existing arrangements in their schools, were obliged to revert to ad hoc efforts to persuade the Director of Education to introduce the "3:30 Plan" at their schools. It will be noted that the parents requesting the plan included both some who favored and some who opposed religious education in the public schools. In March 1961, parents from a further ten schools attended at the office of the Director to request the "3:30 Plan" with "double option" form. However, for the first time, since such requests had begun being made, Dr. Minkler reserved his decision. Not long afterward, he granted the request to six schools and denied it in four. This represented the first time that Dr. Minkler had rejected a request for the "3:30 Plan".

The six schools which received the "3:30 Plan" had large Jewish populations. The four schools which failed to get it had very small Jewish enrolments. In his report to the Board explaining his decision, Dr. Minkler reasoned that in the six schools refusal would probably have led to disruption but in the four "the present program can be continued without disruption to the school program" since in these schools "the overwhelming majority of pupils belonged to various Protestant faiths."*

This decision and line of reasoning created indignation among those who had participated in the original Wilmington compromise. The very development which they had hoped to avoid had now become a reality - a fragmented Township with different solutions in different areas, depending upon the size of the local Jewish community.

We reproduce here extracts from a letter which the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Ethical Education Association sent to the North York Board of Education at this time. It conveys, we believe, the bitterness which was felt in our community as a result of the Board's handling of this problem.

"We register our vigorous objection to Dr. Minkler's refusal to extend the 3:30 religious education program to Downsview, Greenland, Norman Ingram and Overland Schools.

* Board of Education for the Township of North York minutes for the year 1961, page 178.

"This ruling and indeed the Board's policy on the religious education issue, we can only describe as morally indefensible. Rather than adhere to a single standard principle which is equally applicable to all, the Board has decided to adopt a double standard, one where Protestants are in the majority and one where Jews are in the majority. We feel that this is an incredible basis for distinction. Such a policy is tantamount to telling Jews and other non-Protestant groups that if they wish the protection of the 3:30 plan for their children, they should move into districts where they will constitute the majority. The logical result of this policy would be a series of ghettoized communities.

"Moreover, we take strong issue with any policy which invokes 'disruption' as a criterion for the protection of children. What Dr. Minkler and the North York Board have said is that the schools and the neighbourhood must be disrupted if the children are to be protected from the difficulties attendant upon the exercise of exemption during the normal school day. We point out that it was and is our desire to avoid anything which would disrupt the workings of the school. It is for this very reason that we approached Dr. Minkler without fanfare and publicity. It is also for this reason that many parents agreed to the 3:30 compromise in the first place."

As a result of the ensuing bitterness, a fresh attempt was made to resolve this controversy in the spring of 1961. The Board decided to send out a questionnaire throughout the Township in order to ascertain the general public's reaction to the religious education problem and the way it was being handled.

Anticipating how such a questionnaire could be misconstrued, the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Ethical Education Association wrote to the Board outlining some of the problems which they foresaw. Three essential points emerged from their correspondence:

1. There should be a general question regarding the propriety of religious instruction in North York public schools so that all parents can indicate their views on the central issue.
2. The questionnaire should point out that it is a poll of opinion only and not a vehicle for the exemption of children. Many parents would not wish to exempt their children until they found out at what time the course would be given in their school.

3. It should be specifically pointed out that all parents regardless of how they expressed themselves on the general question, should be entitled to answer the question regarding the time of the instruction. There was a fear that objectors might not express themselves on the issue of time - a matter which was obviously of considerable importance to them.

In accordance with these recommendations the Board meeting of May 4th, 1961, produced the following motions:

1. "That the Board include in its questionnaire a question asking 'Do you favour the teaching of religious education in our public schools?' or words to this effect.
2. "That it be stated that ... this expression of opinion is not to be considered a request for exemption but that your child may be exempted at any time simply by informing the principal of the school of your wishes and your request will be immediately granted without question.
3. "That the questionnaire not be signed."*

All of these motions were defeated.

In a research paper prepared for a doctoral program at the Ontario College of Education, Lois Barker describes the questionnaire as follows:

"When it finally appeared, on May 13th, the questionnaire was almost exactly the document desired by the Citizens' Committee of Concerned Parents and the Ministerial Association /opponents of the 3:30 plan/ and almost exactly not the document desired by the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Ethical Education Association, and the North York Parents Committee for a Fair Religious Education Programme."**

Attached is a copy of the Board's questionnaire.*** You will note that it ignores all the criteria enunciated by the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Ethical Education Association. At the time, there was considerable evidence that great number⁷⁸ of parents were in fact confused by it. For example, we were in receipt of specific evidence that at Dublin Public School, several teachers had instructed the pupils that parents were to answer only one of the questions.

* Board of Education for the Township of North York minutes for year 1961, page 217 (a)

** Religious Controversy in North York (1959-61) P.27

*** See Appendix E I

A telephone canvass of 400 parents at the school disclosed that only 10% believed that they could answer both questions. Most of the parents were under the impression that the questionnaire would serve as an exemption request.

In this respect a letter* was sent to the North York Board of Education on Wednesday, May 24, 1961, by a number of Dublin Public School parents who conducted the survey. In the wake of this evidence and another torrent of criticism Dr. Minkler, nevertheless reported confidently to the Board that "the Township-wide questionnaire ... could not be interpreted as a request ... for exemption from instruction".** Subsequent attempts by the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Ethical Education Association to replace this questionnaire with one that appeared more clear, went down to defeat.

The questionnaire revealed the following:

8,290 said they did not want their children
to receive religious instruction

16,353 preferred 9 a.m.

6,105 preferred 3:30 p.m.

6,355 checked no preference

3,297 did not reply

There were a total of 37,103 replies in all, out of a possible 40,400. Very few opted for 11:30 or 1:30 p.m.

Another Board meeting convened to consider what policy to adopt as the result of the survey. This, of course, precipitated another round of briefs and counter-briefs from the various groups concerned. Again, taking the position that the survey was misleading and illusory, supporters of the 3:30 plan argued their position as one which depended less upon numerical majorities and more upon principle. The tone of the Ethical Education Association brief reflected the increased indignation which opponents of religious instruction were experiencing at this time:

"Since 3:30 is a customary departure hour, it would involve less conspicuousness for the dis-senter than any other prescribed instruction time. We would remind the Board that until the 3:30 plan was introduced in the eleven schools where it is now, there were very few recorded exemptions in North York. This confirms our view that parents

* See Appendix E II

** Minkler, F.W. Interim Report re Questionnaire concerning instruction in Religious Education in the Public Schools Presented to the Board of Ed. for the Township of North York, June 1, 1961.

are reluctant to seek exemption for their children unless they have some guarantee that their children will not suffer undue embarrassment. Regardless of all the theoretical arguments about what should or should not be embarrassing to children, the parents who are in the most sensitive position of all declined to exempt until they had the protection of the 3:30 plan ... Until this plan was introduced, we had the anomalous situation where parents of differing religious views, contrary to their conscience, were allowing their children to take indoctrination classes in a form of religious instruction to which they did not subscribe ... If the instruction takes place during the regular school day, the Board must answer for a policy of compelling religious conformity from little school children."

However, despite these pleas, the 3:30 plan went down to another defeat. In fact, after all the briefs were heard, some favouring the 9 a.m. instruction time, some favouring 3:30, the Board was left with its existing policy. The difficulty was that on the religious education issue the Board was deadlocked 4-4. As a result, no new motion could succeed. Thus the status quo was preserved against everyone's wishes. Only one change had been made during the course of the winter. The Board had appropriated to itself the power which it had previously given to the Director. From now on, if in the Board's opinion, religious instruction was causing disruption in any school, it could alter the times and send out the "double option" form.

The result was that a few additional schools were granted the 3:30 plan and a few others were denied it. The irony was that after all this time, energy, and community disruption, the Board was left with a policy of which both it and the community disapproved.

Indeed, the Board expressed its frustration in a subsequent resolution directed to the Minister of Education. Stating frankly that the religious . . . education program had created difficult community tensions, the Board unanimously petitioned the Minister of Education to establish a committee of experts to evaluate the whole relationship of religion and education in our community.

It is only that resolution and the subsequent establishment of this Committee that prevented further disruptions in North York. For our part, we have engaged in very little further activity to change this situation in the hope that a satisfactory solution will emanate from this Committee and Queen's Park.*

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- * The Township of Etobicoke also suffered from considerable controversy and disruption on the question of religious education. Deputations also appeared before its Board of Education and the matter even became an issue in an election campaign with a ministerial group advertising in a neighbourhood weekly seeking potential candidates to run on a platform approving religious education in the public schools.

APPENDIX EI

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF NORTH YORK

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

To Parents of Children Attending Public School in North York:

In accordance with The Public Schools Act and the Regulations pursuant thereto, instruction in Religious Education may be scheduled at any of four different times during the school day. Will you please indicate, by checking one of the spaces below, the approved time during which you prefer that instruction in Religious Education be given.

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. _____

11:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon _____

1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. _____

3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. _____

No preference _____

If you do not wish your child to receive instruction in Religious Education, please check this space _____

Please return this questionnaire to the school within the next ten days.

May 15, 1961

(signed) H.R. Partlow,
Superintendent of Public Schools

School _____

Name of Child _____ Grade _____

Date _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian

APPENDIX EII

Wednesday, May 24th, 1961.

Dr. F.W. Minkler,
Director of the North York Board of Education,
15 Oakburn Cres.,
Willowdale, Ontario.

Dear Sir:

The undersigned are parents of pupils attending Dublin Public School. We write to direct some questions to you regarding the questionnaire, dealing with religious education in North York public schools.

Prior to last week, we had understood that we might answer both questions. Since every child's time is involved whether he takes religious instruction or not, the questionnaire seems valueless unless every parent answers the question regarding religious instruction time. However, due to the wording of the questionnaire there seems to be much confusion on this point.

In Dublin Public School, some of the teachers instructed the children that only one question should be answered. In one case a teacher erased answers dealing with time preference. Being alarmed at this, during the week-end we telephoned about four hundred parents at the school and discovered that only ten percent believed that they could answer both questions. Would you please clarify this problem? May we, or may we not answer both questions?

Moreover, the vast majority of these parents were under the impression that the questionnaire was designed as a request for exemption. Our understanding had been that it was merely a poll of opinion. Which interpretation is correct?

If parents in Dublin have been so misled, there is every reason to believe that this confusion exists in other schools as well. We would be grateful for an early reply to our inquiries, along with some indication as to what steps will be taken to clarify this confusion in both our school and the rest of the township.

Yours truly,

cc.: Dr. H.R. Partlow,
Chairman, and members of the North York Board of Education.

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APPENDIX F.

To the Honourable Leslie M. Frost,
Prime Minister of Ontario.

Honourable Sir:

The Canadian Jewish Congress, a body politic and corporate under Part 11 of the Companies Act of Canada appears before you representing the Jewish community of Ontario as its official spokesman in matters of public interest. Its national headquarters are in Montreal and it maintains an office in Toronto for the Central Region (Ontario)

In June 1897 a brief was submitted to the Toronto Board of Education in the name of the Jews of the city of Toronto and signed by three distinguished citizens of Toronto of that day, Messrs. Alfred Benjamin, Edmund Scheuer and the Reverend A. Lazarus, Rabbi of the Toronto Hebrew Congregation (Holy Blossom). The effective opening words of this submission were:

"To our minds, the scheme that has been laid before you is in the last degree ill-advised, inexpedient, and objectionable, and ought not to be entertained for a single moment."

Their entire brief - which was successful in attaining its object - is submitted for your appreciation as an appendix to this submission - bearing in mind its historical character and setting.

The last time an official deputation from the Canadian Jewish Congress appeared before an Ontario governmental body on this question was in 1945. At that time in making our submission (Brief #46, Memorandum #1) before the Royal Commission on Education, we expressed our unequivocal opposition to the courses in religious instruction which the administration of this province, headed at that time by the Honourable Mr. George Drew, was planning to introduce. The fact that we have not made any official approaches on this level in the meantime does not in the least mean that we have overlooked or neglected this matter. In the years since 1945, the question of religious education in the public schools has been a permanent and vexing item on the agenda of our Public Relations Committee. At various regional conferences of the Canadian Jewish Congress - in 1948 in Toronto, in 1952 in Hamilton, in 1954 in St. Catharines, and most recently in a national Canada-wide plenary session in 1956 - we have thoroughly canvassed and discussed this matter with representatives of the Jewish community, and we have on each occasion been unanimously directed by them to press for the removal of this course from the public schools.

We would be happy to report if we could, that the fears we expressed in our brief of 1945 have proved groundless or were exaggerated. However, we must report that unfortunately all of our experience over the last decade has

justified our apprehensions. Our forecasts of tensions, difficulties and dilemmas unfortunately have been almost fully realized. Whenever our staff members or lay leaders visit our Jewish communities throughout the province without fail they are asked by religious leaders and parents: "What do we do about this problem?" You may say, as we perforce do, that a ready answer has been provided by the regulations and that all that needs to be done is for parents to make use of the exemption provisions. On a number of occasions, Mr. Prime Minister, we have distributed to the Jewish citizens of Ontario a bulletin stating that having regard to their position the only recommendation we could make was that they exercise the right of exemption to which they are entitled by law. We have appended hereto such a bulletin issued in the year 1952 which has been sent out many times since then to individuals, rabbis and to communities who have sought guidance.

This, however, does not go to the root of the matter, for exemption creates in the minds of pupils and parents almost as many problems as it may solve. It sets up unnecessary and unwanted distinctions which create serious psychological hazards in the emotional development of children. The public school, we submit, should be the institution which should seek to inculcate a common and unifying influence and standard of citizenship among pupils of all backgrounds and religious beliefs. This is not our peculiar concept of the public school, but one which all democratic states have held forth as their ideal and objective. In this period when large waves of immigration are coming to our country it should be our aim to integrate differences rather than to accentuate them. The right to the practice of exemption - while based, we recognize, on respect for minorities - nevertheless serves to divide rather than unify. It only serves further to underline distinctions and differences which, we devoutly hope, you will agree have no place in a tax-supported public school system.

If, however, parents seek to avoid these problems and do not use the right of exemption, what happens? Unless they risk these problems and use the divisive exemption system, Jewish parents and religious teachers who gladly expend time, energy and effort at great personal and communal sacrifice to instruct our children in the historic tenets and practices of our faith find in sorrow that their children are taught other and conflicting doctrines and practices - and where? - in the public school, which of all the institutions in our society should be the one place where one would least expect to find such a disruptive practice. This, sir, is our dilemma.

The problem, Mr. Prime Minister, is not that we are primarily concerned that the schools will become a proselytizing agency. Religious instruction has always been part of Jewish family life. It has been our tradition that the family and the synagogue are the best place in which to indoctrinate people with religious thinking. We have recognized that religion is of great importance in education and we have always devoted a great deal of attention to it from time immemorial. We have adequate faith in our own resources, in our hold on our youth, and in the efficacy of our voluntary and privately maintained after-school systems of Jewish religious education, maintained we may say at some cost to the Jewish community. What concerns us and what we respectfully feel should concern your Government is what must happen to the relationship between the individual pupil of a non-conforming

religion and his school, the institution the child should regard as his very own. The fact that a religion is taught from whose instruction he must ask exemption, sets up an alienation and estrangement in an area where respect and intimacy should prevail. We are weakening an important fibre in the fabric of citizenship.

The principal argument that is made to justify doctrinal teachings in the schools is that instruction in Christianity must be introduced to offset the growing religious illiteracy in our midst. We, along with the others, deplore such a situation. But this is a challenge which the churches of this province should eagerly accept. They should make every effort to intensify their religious school programme, make it as attractive as possible and at the same time give strength and body to their church organization. Indeed, for the public school to take away their work casts a reflection on their ability and capacity to do their job properly. We wonder what may happen to the Sunday School systems of the churches now that the religious instruction which continues unchecked in the elementary schools is being extended even into the secondary schools. The Christian churches, if we may respectfully say so, appear to us to be surrendering a very important and vital element of their jurisdiction, the education of their youth - their hope for the future.

The regulations and programme for religious education in the public schools, as issued in 1949, states that

"the scriptural interpretations are to be non-sectarian, and will not follow the tenets or doctrines of any particular creed. They will be confined to those expressions of the Christian faith upon which all Christian denominations are in substantial agreement."

We fully appreciate that the government, in recommending a "non-sectarian" type of teaching did not wish to cause offence to any particular faith or creed and wanted the course to proceed with the maximum of harmony. But how can one reconcile a "non-sectarian" approach with an emphasis on Christian denominational instruction? Is there such a thing as "non-sectarian" teaching, particularly of a sectarian faith? As long as men's minds differ on religion and the interpretation of the universe, there never will be this kind of "non-sectarianism". The "lowest common denominator" religion is in any event a delusion, for what is left and what is worth teaching when one removes the specific emphasis of each particular faith? Religions do not exist as abstract creeds any more than there exists an abstract man, taken out of time and space and unqualified by nationality, state of civilization, beliefs and practices.

In any case we are not prepared to agree that the curriculum can be accurately described as non-doctrinal. What is more, our experience has been that in practice some teachers depart from it and introduce doctrine which is in fact outside the curriculum, bringing in such themes as Original Sin and the doctrine of Hell and Satan. We do not condemn them personally for this, for the essence of religious faith is belief, embodied in a tradition of ethics expressed in individual conduct, and removing this

makes it almost impossible to impart any sincere religious belief. They cannot be asked to shed their personality in such an intimate matter as their religious beliefs. We are convinced, therefore, that the course in religious education cannot be modified in such a way as to be made acceptable. We urge the serious consideration by your government that such teaching be removed from the schools, thereby restoring it to the church and home where it properly belongs and where it alone can successfully be imparted.

Citizenship has been a proud watchword of your administration, which has pioneered in anti-discrimination legislation. Yours was the first government in this country to enact Fair Employment Practices laws and Fair Accommodation Practices laws, and has been justly praised throughout the continent for its far-sighted leadership in this field. Is there not some anomaly here? This province which on the one hand forbids the practice of racial or religious discrimination in employment and accommodation nevertheless, on the other hand, under a practice and policy inherited from the previous administration encourages the practice of segregating children of minority groups on the very basis of religious belief.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Irving Oelbaum
National Vice-President
Canadian Jewish Congress

Sydney M. Harris
Chairman, Joint Public Relations Committee
Canadian Jewish Congress & B'nai B'rith
(Central Region)

January 16th, 1957.

APPENDIX G

A BRIEF PRESENTED ON BEHALF OF

THE NORTH YORK BRANCH
OF THE
ETHICAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

SUBMITTED BY

PROFESSOR JOHN R. SEELEY
33 Langbourne Place,
Don Mills, (North York), Ontario

and

Mrs. DONALD J. DODDS
President of the Ethical Education
Association.

13 February, 1961.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE NORTH YORK BOARD OF EDUCATION:

We are glad to be here tonight to present our views, and those of many others, on an issue that we, together with all right-minded people, believe to be vital to the welfare of our children, our teachers, our school-system and our community. It is good to know that we have a school-board that not only shares these concerns, but one that is willing, in the face of many other demands on its time, to give the necessary careful deliberation to a matter whose discussion is so often attended more by heat and passion than light and reason.

We speak here officially for the North York Branch of the Ethical Education Association, which is composed of residents of the Township, many of them parents whose children attend its Public Schools -- their Public Schools. We cannot speak for, but we know from numerous sources that we express the views also of numberless unorganized parents in the Township, who have expressed themselves in letters to newspapers, in telephone calls, and otherwise, as individuals.

THE BASIC POSITION OF THIS SUBMISSION

We do not wish the argument, intent, or effect of this brief to be extended or, for any reason, misrepresented or misunderstood. There is in it no argument against, and no basis for argument against religion or any religious institution; indeed, insofar as it touches on that matter at all, it holds to the classic democratic position that religion is best preserved by religiously protecting from Caesar what is held to belong to God.

We, together with all good citizens, are for good, happy and intelligent children; for schooling that teaches true facts and sound, universally approved habits and attitudes; for a community enthusiastically united behind a school system that represents the proper aspirations of all.

We are for a return to the tried position on religious education in the public schools that obtained in Ontario from 1858 on, and that was broken only by the ill-advised experiment of 1944.

We are against only one thing: the continuation of that damaging experiment. And we are against that continuation because we hold it to be contrary to precedent, undemocratic, divisive and increasingly unworkable.

We ask simply for a restoration of the non-denominational public school, serving justly, as it must, peoples of all faiths, offering to no one religious group or combination of them a preferential pulpit from which to advance its particular views or practices. In a community such as ours in North York, composed increasingly of people of many religious persuasions and cultural heritages, we wish the school to exert its proper unifying influence as the school of all the people, rather than to divide by its program group against group, child against child, parent against teacher, or, perhaps worst, the child within himself.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE PRESENT PROVISIONS

Before examining the effects of the present system, it would seem instructive to see how it evolved. We have statutory law, general regulation thereunder, and applications of the regulation to particular cases.

(a) The Statute

The relevant Statute is the Public Schools Act (1858). The matter of religion and the schools is dealt with in Section 7 of that Act. Section 7(1) deals with religious exercises, which are not at issue here. Section 7(2) deals with religious instruction, thus: "Subject to the regulations, pupils shall be allowed to receive such religious instruction as their parents or guardians desire."

This is the whole of the statute law on the subject, and, despite challenge, this Section has never been construed to mean anything except that parents might, if they so desired, take positive action to secure for their children religious instruction on school premises.

(b) The Regulations

Nevertheless, in 1944, the Department of Education of that day secured the passing of Ontario Regulation 30/44 reading as follows:

"Subject to the regulations, two periods per week of one-half hour each, in addition to the time assigned to religious exercises at the opening of school, shall be devoted to Religious Education."

This regulation obviously does not specify the proposed content of the religious education, nor deal at all with the difficult question as to what denominational views are to be presented (or, at least, not violated) by the program to be developed. However, the matter is dealt with implicitly and obliquely in the General Regulations which specify (General Regulations and Programme, page 7, sect.5) that certain books published by Ryerson Press "shall be used."

Examination of these texts, common consent and the historical record all indicate that these books represent a sort of compromised Protestantism; not fully representative of any Protestant faith, offensive to some communions, still less representative of the views of "all Christians", let alone of those who, religious or not, do not share the Christian faith.

The regulations do, it is true, provide that parents, teachers or school boards may secure exemption if they are willing to take positive appropriate action.

"No pupil shall be required to take part in any religious exercises or be subject to any religious instruction in Religious Education to which objection is raised by his parent or guardian."

We come thus to a curious destination. Under a regulation which scrupulously names no denomination and speaks of no particular practice or doctrine, there has been prescribed for teaching in the public schools a course of study conforming to the real wishes of but a few Protestant Churches, strictly representative of the religious views of probably less than a majority, and certainly offensive to many. And, under a Statute that clearly requires parents to elect severally for religious instruction if they wish their children to have it, we have a regulation that requires them to ask for exemption from religious instruction if they wish their children to avoid the particular form of it laid down in the Ryerson books.

Even so, the Township has already found it wise to exempt some of its schools from the provisions under which the others operate, so that no new departure in principle is necessary to secure the relief sought in this brief.

THE EFFECT OF THE PRESENT PROVISIONS

- (1) We hold the present provisions to be contrary to good precedent, and to have introduced a radical departure from the intent, force and meaning of the foresighted statute under which the public schools were set up. We have probably already sufficiently argued this point.
- (2) We hold the present provisions to be undemocratic -- or, more precisely, in grave and dangerous contravention of democratic and human rights. The corner-stone of liberal democracy is respect for the individual and his rights, and foremost of these rights is the jealously guarded one to choose, each one, his own form of worship for himself and his children. Long precedent, based on protracted, unhappy attempts to proceed on other principles, has taught the English-speaking peoples to hold this right inviolate against any claim of the state, whether acting through state schools or otherwise. We take our stand with George Brown, a Father of Confederation:

"There is no safety short of the principle that religion is a matter entirely between man and his God, and the whole duty of the State is to secure to everyone the peaceful observance of it. Anything else leads to oppression and injustice."

It is the very touchstone of a free, non-totalitarian society, that the responsibility for the zealous safeguarding of the rights of the minorities falls upon the majority, and that nowhere more than in this do they show themselves responsible, moral and, in the highest sense of the term, religious persons.

It is wise if we are willing, even for a moment, to entertain compromising with this principle (thus casting away the hard-won victory of centuries) to remind ourselves that, given present population trends, even all

Protestant groups taken together will probably in the not-too-distant future find themselves a minority. If they espouse this position of convenience now, they will inevitably be exposed to its consequences then. If the principle of religious teaching in the public schools to suit supposed majority preference, is accepted now (when Roman Catholic citizens are about 43% of the population) it can hardly be dissented from in 1980 (when Roman Catholic citizens are expected to number 53% of the populace).

- (3) We hold the present provisions to be divisive. Under the present rulings and practices, what is essentially private and familial is dragged into the realm of the public, and what was merely different and permissible, becomes deviant and allowable only by special exemption. This is not a matter of what might or could occur, but of what has occurred and does occur..

(a) THE CHILD

Child is divided against child in the classroom. Inevitably children of parents who are opposed to the Ryerson Press program on religious or other grounds find themselves beside the children of parents who are indifferent, or in favour of it. Children of those parents who do conscientiously ask exemption are thus publicly separated out from their fellows -- with damage to both. Those whose parents approve or, at least, do not oppose the official system can hardly avoid a false feeling of superiority and even a tincture of arrogance; certainly they feel differentially accepted and confirmed. The children exempted feel, in many cases, confused, hurt and rejected; the very feelings the school has been at such pains to avoid for every child on every other count.

Children, as the school itself asserts, are all too quickly aware of difference, and to hints as to "better" or "worse". We cannot simultaneously teach them verbally to respect their fellows regardless of "race, creed or national origin", and then have the differences dramatically brought to mind in the public school in ways that suggest that some are more equal than others. And how can they infer otherwise if some children leave the class while others remain for what the teacher and the school must believe to be good -- else it would not be admitted to the curriculum.

Another child is divided against his own parents -- or against his teacher. If the parents act on principle and exercise their right to the child's exemption, and if the child feels, as is almost inevitable, embarrassed, self-conscious and a pawn in a conflict he cannot generally understand, he may well blame the parent who puts him in this particular spot. Such resentment will damage both

child and parent. A penalty has been inflicted on an innocent child, not really by a parent who secures for him a right that should never have been called into question, but by a regulation that exposes him to conflict that no child ought to have to manage, and few children can. If, on the other hand, the child comes from the kind of home we would wish for him, if he identifies with his parents appropriately for his age, the conflict may serve to call into question in his mind the wisdom and integrity we should like him to impute to the school; and the consequences may ramify to general questioning of state authority, educational authority or authority in general, in ways inappropriate for his age, or perhaps for any age. Worse, the child may internalize the conflict between home and school, and, owing loyalty to and having affection for both, become genuinely divided within himself, with intolerable consequences for all.

The child may even be divided from religion and morality. Perhaps, the worst consequence from any point of view accrues to the child of parents opposed to the views of the course, who have insufficient strength to demand exemption or are too careful of the child's welfare and happiness to risk its consequences. He may well learn (and many do, and say they do) to hold his tongue, to dissimulate, even to lie, and thus to infer as a consequence of religious education in the schools the very opposite of what both the religious and the non-religious would have him believe: that religion does indeed matter.

(b) THE SCHOOL

Teacher is divided against teacher, and many a teacher is divided within his own conscience.

The teachers are -- one hopes -- of all faiths and many religions. In their training period, they receive instruction from clergymen of their own faith, but upon this basis are expected somehow to teach the approved form of compromise Protestantism. In the outside case, we may have a Jewish teacher faithfully attempting to teach a class in which Jewish children predominate, the text-book version of middle Protestantism.

Teachers are themselves divided in their views on this matter. Some deplore religious instruction in the school; some are for it; some are indifferent. Some "compromise" further by teaching a watered-down version of the official compromise; some rebel and reintroduce what they believe to be more orthodox, usually whatever they themselves picked up variously in their own childhood.

The official instruction is little help to them. The Grade I Teacher's Guide tells them "The aim of the course is to teach the common faith". But there is no common faith, as the faithful know; there are many faiths, all equal before the law. How can one speak of a "common Faith" in Ontario, when all non-Christians and somewhat more than half the Christians have to be excluded to make it so; and, even then, the differences between those left have to be brushed aside or neglected. When the Grade I Guide also states "Nor is there any dispute as to the ultimate aim of the instruction, which is the acceptance of the historic Christian faith" can any reasonable person deny to his Roman Catholic brethren at least equal title to that definition as his own?

(c) THE COMMUNITY

Divisive as such an issue is in any community -- "explosive" was the word reported as used here in a previous meeting -- and disruptive of right and decent relations between men of good conscience, this effect might be overlooked if the child did not pay the price in the end, anyway. Even though, as is the case, parent were set against parent, religious group against religious group, and thus believer against otherwise-believer, one might be willing to pay this cost if the child benefited. But a child does not only grow up in school; he grows up, if he is to grow up at all, into the community that surrounds him. And if that community is divided in public on what it may properly differ on in private, then there is no proper community for him to grow up into anyway, and all is for naught. So the community is damaged without due cause; and the child is hurt without benefit; and his parents, injured without justice; and religion itself is harmed without need. No right view of religion can counterpose the interest of religion to the welfare of the child. Religion is preserved best, the child protected in his rights, education and the welfare of the community served together where no religious groups seek to capture the public school system for any purpose, no matter how "good".

- (4) We hold the present provisions to be unworkable. It lays yet one more burden upon an already overburdened school. Dr. Murray Ross, President of York University and then Vice-President of the University of Toronto, put it thus in 1959:

"You know of course that there has been both from within the school and from the community pressure to broaden the program of the school to include a whole host of other functions such as social adjustment, religious instruction, traffic safety and many other irrelevancies. It seems to me that the school should not be asked to take on the function of the home or the church or the traffic court or any other such institution."

The instructions cannot be carried out. The point about "the common faith" and the "historic Christian faith" has already been made. But still more difficult, the regulations (page 5) instruct the teacher that "issues of a controversial or sectarian nature are to be avoided". But the very core-matter of the course is controversial to many, and sectarian by definition to something like half the population.

Can all in the community -- can all Christians, even -- accept the following from the Grade 6 Teacher's Guide?

"Jesus Christ goes forth today, bringing peace, a gladness and a satisfaction to the men and women of Africa and the East, which their own religions do not afford you sit here, clothed and in your right mind, as a living proof of the value of Christian missions."

The question answers itself.

In the long run, the present system, which must depend upon segregation for its present degree of workability, must prove as unworkable here as segregation-based education has become in the Southern States of the U.S.A. and for similar reasons. As the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, all such solutions are offenses against the child and against human dignity.

Lastly, the system appears to be immediately and administratively unworkable, here in North York, now. The fact that last year a resolution was passed by this Board making exceptional arrangements (relative to the rest) for five schools in the Township, indicates that the community is already divided on a geographic basis. The logical result of the pursuit of this principle would be to draw together into one part of the Township all those who favoured any type of religious teaching but the official one, so that we would have geographic segregation along religious lines added to the (temporary) religious segregation within the other schools that is part of the present system. If parents in five schools may have a different time-table and a different option-system, how can the right conceded in practice to some be denied in principle and in practice to all?

PROPOSAL

On the grounds given -- that the present provisions are contrary to good precedent, divisive, anti-democratic and finally unworkable, we request:

THAT THE NORTH YORK BOARD OF EDUCATION, IN THE INTERESTS OF RELIGION AND EDUCATION AND MORE PARTICULARLY THE CHILDREN IN ITS CARE, SEEK FROM THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION EXEMPTION AS PROVIDED FROM THE TEACHING OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ALL THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE TOWNSHIP.

APPENDIX H - EXPERIENCE IN KENTUCKY

A number of concrete examples will more effectively illustrate the Kentucky program in action. Generally speaking, value situations embrace six broad classifications:

1. Living as a member of the school community
2. All the deliberately planned subject matter offerings, i.e. the courses and subjects given
3. The occasions for guidance and counselling
4. Student activities and organizations
5. Sport and recreational life
6. The fine arts media and symbolic expression

In this regard we might consider the situation which developed at a High School when the new cafeteria was opened. The principal consulted with the Student Assembly on the types of conduct which would promote the most satisfactory arrangement in the cafeteria. All agreed that boisterous talk was undesirable and that no teacher supervision was needed. Accordingly no Faculty supervision was imposed and no "incidents" occurred.

Another illustration which shows the plan in action is that of the English teacher who periodically wrote quotations on the blackboard. This often stimulated informal discussion on ethical values. This teacher made it a standard practice to discuss the moral lessons in literary selections that were studied.

Teachers who are consulted about guidance problems have a unique opportunity to stress values. In the selection of books, courses, extra curricular activity, they guide the student in the making of moral choices. One guidance teacher who knew of a boy's bad driving record recommended a "hot rod" thriller as extra curricular reading. The book was designed to impress the principles of safe driving. In the case of giddy adolescent girls, the teacher often recommended books on sex, early marriage, puppy love, etc.

The material is replete with examples of good group work that teachers have done. Faced with the problem of integrating introverted and unhappy youngsters into the school community, teachers have gone out of their way to impress upon their pupils the need to make the strange child feel comfortable and accepted.

Information and knowledge regarding the various religious customs are imparted naturally as the occasion demands. Instead of devising specific course material and specific hours for these purposes, it arises within the content of every day experience. At Christmas time, or during Chanukah, Passover, or Easter, the sensitive teacher explains in an objective manner the various religious practices to his pupils. The natural thing at Christmas time, for example,

is to explain the meaning of Christmas. Or, when Jewish children absent themselves for religious holidays, it furnishes an opportunity for the teacher to inculcate in the children an insight into and appreciation of such religious observance. During Brotherhood Week, on Human Rights Day, during a social studies class, the sensitive teacher talks about the various groups that make up our society. All this comes across through the informal give and take of classroom discussion. Formal instruction becomes redundant.

APPENDIX I - MORAL VALUES & EDUCATION: THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SECTION I

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

The Problem

No impartial observer of the American scene today can help but be distressed with the present difficulties that our schools are facing in transmitting to our young people those moral and ethical values* that are indispensable to the functioning of a democratic society. It is equally clear, however, that the responsibility for this difficulty cannot and should not be laid solely at the door of our educators or of our public schools. On the contrary, the difficulties which our schools are facing are merely a reflection of the difficulties and problems of our times. The tragedy and callousness of two World Wars, the social and economic upheaval of the post-war years, the complexities of our ever-growing giant industrial organization, the social readjustments in race relations, the changes in the function and responsibility of the family unit, the international tensions that are the natural concomitants of the cold war and the terrifying prospect of atomic warfare -- have all produced confusion and conflict in the moral fiber of our social structure. Nothing seems to be secure and enduring. Social institutions, human relations, concepts of life, space, time and the universe are in a state of flux.

In the face of these profound and bewildering changes it is no wonder that our schools, homes and religious institutions are having difficulty in projecting and imparting an ethical and moral code that has meaning and vitality today.

In such a world, how does one impart to children a sense of purpose and meaning in life? How does one impart a respect for the dignity and inherent worth of each human being? And, how does one impart a love of fellow man and a belief in the "ultimate good"? Obviously these questions cannot be solved solely in the classroom. Attempts to place the major responsibility for the frailty of human conduct on the public schools, moreover, divert attention from the major causes of our inadequacies and from the function and responsibility of other social institutions which must share in the development of a sound and meaningful code of moral and ethical behavior in our society. The most that the schools can do is to provide direction and guidance to children in learning to live as effectively as they can within the framework of our social order. They can attempt to teach ethical and moral values as standards or accepted norms for human conduct. They can attempt to teach an understanding of human beings and their relationship to each other. And, they can develop potentials and skills essential to creative living.

* We use the term moral and ethical values to mean "those values which, when applied to human behaviour, refine life and bring it into accord with the standards of conduct that are approved in our democratic culture". (Statement on Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools, Educational Policies Commission, National Education Association of the US (1951)).

As a practical matter, our public schools are not neglecting these problems. Educational periodicals, source materials for curricular development, and guidance material for teachers and public school officials are replete with attempts to work out programs through which moral and ethical values can be projected in our schools.* They are replete with attempts to develop programs designed to teach character, develop personality, help a child distinguish between right and wrong and develop a respect for the concepts of justice, truth, creativity and freedom. But these are not simple objectives; they are difficult and complex. There are no simple answers to questions which go to the core of our contemporary existence. But one thing is clear. They will not be answered or solved by careless or irresponsible accusations directed against our public schools. Nor will they be solved by efforts to introduce religious teachings into public education.

It is indeed unfortunate that certain groups today are using this problem as an excuse to justify the introduction of religion into the public schools under the guise of "moral and spiritual value programs". These groups take the position that our children can grow up with a sense of direction, of purpose and of morality only if God is brought into our "godless and atheistic schools". Or, as one of its ardent proponents has put it, "If religion is excluded from the public schools, our children will grow up with no knowledge of God and His rules of conduct -- practically pagans, potentially dangerous citizens, candidates for the prison cells, without hope in time or eternity. And the nation suffers. Crime is rampant. No home is exempt. Our property and lives are in danger. Our mothers, wives and daughters may suffer and die at the hands of rapists."** Some have presented the argument in somewhat more moderate terms. But they, too, insist that crime, juvenile delinquency and low moral standards that exist in America today can only be overcome by introducing religious education in the public schools. Only through the introduction of such religious instruction in our schools, they state, can "we regain the high moral standards which have made America great."***

* Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools, published by the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association, Washington D.C. (1954); Spiritual Values in the Elementary School, Twenty-Sixth Yearbook, National Elementary Principal, a Bulletin of the Dept. of Elementary School Principals, National Education Association, Washington D.C. (Vol. XXVII, #1, Sept. 1947). See also An Answer to Charge of Secularism, Arthur H. Rice, The Nation's Schools (Aug. 1951, p. 70)

** Dr. Fleming quoted by Leo Pfeffer in Church, State and Freedom, Beacon Press, Boston (1953), p. 300.

*** The Blind Spot in American Education, Clyde Hay, quoted in Church, State and Freedom, cited above, p. 301.

It is interesting to note, however, that these groups have never offered any adequate proof that moral and ethical behaviour is lower in our secular public schools than in our parochial schools; or that religious schools produce children more sensitive to or more influenced by moral standards. The frequent statements that link religious instruction with moral behaviour are pure assumptions, never successfully established. Indeed, whatever scientific tests have been made indicate that the assumption is not based on fact.* A study in 1954 of 915 Catholic girls attending classes in religious instruction in schools located in the states of New Jersey and New York reveals that "religious training within each group did not contribute to the subject's ability to apply principles of moral law to the life situations. In general, the religious experiences of the eleventh grade girls did not contribute to their ability to form correct moral judgments."**

The American Jewish Congress while believing deeply in the need for including moral and ethical values in public education, has consistently opposed the introduction of such programs couched in terms of religious dogma, doctrine and sanction.

We believe that separation of church and state is a basic part of our American way of life. Upon this principle, established more than 150 years ago, has rested the development of religious freedom in our country and the religious harmony that has characterized our history. In America religion has always been a private matter, not the concern of the government or any of its agencies, including the schools. On the contrary, we believe that religious instruction is the responsibility of the home, the church and the synagogue. Our non-sectarian public school system was founded upon that principle.

In colonial times not only were our schools controlled and dominated by the various church groups but the right of the church to dictate to the teachers in the schools was clearly recognized by the state. It was only after a long and bitter struggle which lasted until the last half of the 19th century that control of public education shifted from the church to the state. With the development of the West after 1800, with its indifference to many of the traditions of the East, with the coming of increased foreign immigration, and with the

* Church, State and Freedom, cited above, p.303.

** Carman V. Diaz, a Study of the Ability of Eleventh Grade Girls to Apply the Principles of Moral Law to Actual and Hypothetical Life Situations, Ph.D., Fordham University, New York, (1952); abstracted in Religious Education, Vol. XLIX, May-June, 1954, pp. 181-182.

intermingling of people of different faiths in the rapidly growing cities and towns, the religious uniformity of the early colonial periods ceased to exist. In its place there developed the great diversity of religious beliefs that characterize America today. This factor plus a growing recognition that the success of democracy depends on providing education for all, regardless of race, creed or religion, led to America's unique experiment -- the secular public school system. History has without a doubt justified this experiment and has proven the proposition on which it was based -- that complete separation of church and state is best for the church and is best for the state and secures freedom for both. "If there is any one thing which is well settled in the policies and purposes of the American people as a whole, it is the fixed and unalterable determination that there shall be an absolute and unequivocal separation of church and state, and that our public school system supported by the taxation of the property of all alike -- Catholic, Protestant, Jew, Gentile, believer and infidel -- shall not be used directly or indirectly for religious instruction, and above all that it shall not be made an instrumentality of proselytizing influence in favor of any religious organization, sect or creed, or belief."*

AJCongress is unequivocally committed to this concept of separation of church and state. It views with deep concern and misgiving, therefore, the growing attempts to introduce religious teachings in the public schools under the guise of "moral and spiritual value programs". It views with equal concern the accusation of "amorality" directed against those who oppose the introduction of these programs. These organizations and individuals are neither "godless" nor amoral. They, like the AJCongress, strongly urge that moral and ethical values be included in our public school curriculum -- but that these programs can and should be divorced from religious dogma and sanctions.

The Congress recognizes that such teachings are in many cases already part of the school curriculum. It feels, however, that much remains to be done in redefining these values -- in clarifying the role that the public school must play in projecting them in the classroom -- and in devising techniques and program aids to assist the school teacher in imparting these values without reference to the existence or non-existence of a supernatural being and without reference to religious sanction, ritual or dogma. This Manual is directed toward these ends. It is by no means intended as a "curriculum guide" to teachers on how to teach morals and ethics in five easy lessons. As we explain further in this Manual, we strongly oppose such an approach to teaching values. We feel it is bad pedagogy and ignores sound theories of educational motivation, aspiration and learning. All we have attempted to do is to demonstrate that the basic moral and ethical values in our democracy can be

* Knowlton v. Baumhover, 182, Iowa 691 (1918)

projected without reference to religious dogma and sanction; and that this position is supported by many deeply religious persons and organizations concerned with morality and ethics. We also discuss the part that the teacher, the curriculum and the public school administration must play in the development of such a program. We outline in detail the Kentucky Plan for teaching moral and spiritual values -- as an experimental pilot project developed by the Board of Education in Kentucky for teaching values in the classroom -- without relying on religious sanctions and doctrine.

In brief, we have prepared this material to highlight the issues involved in this complex problem and to provide a positive program and approach for those persons who are committed to the teaching of moral values in the schools, but who do not wish to see the problems this raises used to undermine the basic cornerstone of religious freedom in America -- separation of church and state.

SECTION II

Can Moral Values Be Taught In The Public Schools Without Religious Sanction?

The Values

Although there are many differences of opinion concerning the precise terms in which moral and ethical values may be specifically defined, there is basic agreement concerning the broad substance of what should be included in this phrase. Basic Western moral and ethical ideals stem largely from the teachings of our major faiths and have become an accepted part of our American creed. They are the values which give substance and meaning to the democratic ideal. They have become embedded in our legal and political traditions. They are proclaimed in our historic documents and in the utterances of our statesmen, poets and writers. In their observance or in their breach, they are commonly accepted standards. Thus, there is a common acceptance of the moral and ethical ideal of the worth and dignity of each individual -- the ideal of equality, brotherhood, freedom, honesty, truth, creativeness, justice, service to others, loyalty, humility, friendship, love, honor, self-respect and respect for others.

In fact, an examination of the various moral, ethical and spiritual plans adopted by State Boards of Education throughout the United States indicates an almost universal acceptance of these values, in one form or another. For example, the Long Beach, California, plan defines those moral values which it hopes to project in the classroom as "cooperation, responsibility, group concern, evaluating self, using judgment, using creative power and extending courtesy".* The Los Angeles, California, plan urges the schools to stress "cooperation, courage, faith, generosity, goodwill, honesty, kindness, loyalty, respect for law and responsibility".** The San Diego, California, plan lists such qualities as "generosity, goodwill, cooperation, loyalty, honesty, respect for personality, loyalty to ideals of American democratic life, responsibility for self-direction, perseverance in pursuit of worthy goals and sensitivity, creative ability and reverence".*** The Baltimore, Maryland, plan discusses "fair play, good sportsmanship, cooperation and the principle of democratic living".****

* Guide to the Teaching of Manners and Morals in the Elementary Schools, Long Beach Board of Education, (1944).

** Moral and Spiritual Values in Education in the Los Angeles City Schools, School Publication #402, Los Angeles Board of Education, (1944).

*** Spiritual Values in San Diego City Schools, San Diego Department of Education, (1948).

**** Educating for Spiritual Values, Baltimore Bulletin of Education #26, (Jan. and Mar. 1949).

The Salt Lake City, Utah, plan urges "respect for the human personality, learning to live with classmates, ability to participate constructively in democratic group life, learning to respect authority, increasing one's power over destiny, doing things intelligently, and learning to admit mistakes".* The Hawaii plan divides moral and ethical values into four parts: "Appreciation of self, social sensitivity and competence, harmonizing of values, appreciation of man and the universe".** The New York State's Regents Recommendations highlight the ideals of liberty, respect for the dignity and rights of each individual, devotion to freedom, and brotherhood,*** and the Kentucky Plan**** speaks in terms of "the sanctity of the individual, codes of fair play, and the importance of judging our fellow men according to individual worth".

THE AREAS OF CONFLICT ARISE ONLY WHEN THE QUESTION OF JUSTIFICATION, SANCTION OR ORIGIN OF THESE LAWS IS CONSIDERED. Most of these plans, reflecting either the pressure of organized religious groups or the growing religiosity of our times, insist on including religious sanctions for the ethical values discussed and insist on the proposition that ethical values depend for their existence on "the concept of the Fatherhood of God", "belief and dependence on Almighty God", "love of God", and "on the authority and sanction of our Holy Father". They insist that God is the source of all morality and that therefore it is impossible to teach morality without this sanction.

The AJCongress believes that it is possible and in fact essential to project the validity and universality of these ideals in the public schools without resorting to supernatural sanctions for their existence. To do otherwise would be to open the door to religious misunderstanding and conflict and make the public schools the instrument of those religious groups who would use them for proselytizing and indoctrination. We support the position of the Kentucky Board of Education that has developed such a program based on the following statement of principles:

* Education for Ethical Conduct, Fifth-Seventh Annual Report of the Public Schools of Salt Lake City, Part I, (1946-47), Board of Education, Salt Lake City, (1948).

** Moral and Ethical Values in the Public Schools of Hawaii, Hawaii Territorial Department of Public Instruction, Honolulu, (1949).

*** America's Moral and Spiritual Heritage, Recommendations of the New York Board of Regents, University of the State of New York, N.Y. State Education Department, Albany, (1955).

**** Moral and Spiritual Education in Kentucky, Educational Bulletin, Vol XXVI, (Jan. 1958), #1. Department of Education, Lexington, Kentucky, (1958).

"We recognized from the start that our school program must in no way compete with, or be a substitute for, the religious instruction provided by church and synagogue. We wanted no sectarianism in our schools, and clearly it was not our business to teach theology. As the next step, we rejected the idea of trying to teach a so-called 'non-sectarian' religious common denominator -- to attempt this, we felt, would only produce a watered-down religion unacceptable to all faiths.

"When children are learning which ways of behaviour are acceptable and which are not, they sooner or later will ask 'Why?' or 'Who says so?' Here is where the teacher is called upon to find sanctions, or high authority, for the moral code whereby young people are expected to live. Some states and cities encourage teachers at this point to call upon the strong sanctions of an external supernatural authority invoking the authority of God. In Kentucky, we adopted a different approach.

"Our answer to such questions is that the values by which we live and which guide the life of the schools have their sources both in the teaching of the great religions of mankind and in human experience. We would not base our program on a dogma of any sort, we decided, nor would we cast it in supernaturally grounded ethics. To do so would inevitably lead teachers to answer their pupils in sectarian terms, and might even make religious belief a qualification for teachers."*

Under the Kentucky program, teachers of different religious commitment, (and those with none), are encouraged to help boys and girls arrive at their own right decisions, based on sanctions deriving from law, justice, property rights, personal integrity, group approval, and other democratically accepted ideas, not excluding the pupil's personal religious convictions. These ethical ideas are consonant with the values they learn at home, in their churches and synagogues and which therefore fill out the total experience of the child. Such ethical lessons learned in school offend no child's personal religious sensibilities, and at the same time give those from religiously affiliated homes fresh reasons for being receptive to the ethical precepts of their churches and synagogues".**

* Kentucky Pioneers, J. Mansir Tydings, reprinted from Religious Education, July-August 1956, pg.4.

** Kentucky Pioneers, cited above, pp.4-5

This position is also supported by many deeply religious individuals and organizations. It has been stated eloquently by Rabbi Morris Adler, Rabbi of Congregation Shaarey Zadek, Detroit, and an outstanding Jewish educator and philosopher, in a paper delivered before the Joint Advisory Council on Religion in the Public Schools of the Synagogue Council of America and the National Community Relations Advisory Council, as follows: "As a convinced religionist, I am persuaded that the surest and most impregnable foundations of moral values are to be found in a religious outlook. The moral code within my tradition derives its validity and substantiation from the faith which grounds it in the very nature of the universe. Moral and spiritual corollaries flow logically from its religious view of the world, of life and of man. Philosophically, therefore, I belong to the camp of those who view morality as an outgrowth of a larger all-encompassing religious view. Yet, with regard to public education, I belong to the camp of those who believe that moral and spiritual values in a free society should and can be communicated without the religious theory which supports it and to which concept it is related. The effective inculcation in our young of these values, and this is what we are primarily interested in, is not dependent upon a supporting theology. One's theory of morality may well be an aspect of one's theology. One's moral practices, however, result from habits and experiences which were part of one's childhood training."

"Few intelligent religionists will claim that homesunaffiliated with any church will inevitably produce maladjusted and delinquent children. Nor will an honest religionist deny that within so-called religious homes there are oft reared children who constitute social problems. This is so because the most powerful means of inculcating moral and spiritual values are not doctrines and beliefs or any type of verbal instruction. The effective instruments of such training are examples, experience, whole relationships. Where the child sees the sound example, participates in character-building experiences and is encouraged to enter into wholesome relationships, he will be powerfully influenced for good. The low estate of people's moral lives is due not to anti-religious ideas and theories but to wrong and false examples and practices. Eric Fromm has pointed out that, 'the threat to the religious attitude lies not in science but in the predominant practices of daily life.' (Psycho-analysis and Religion, p.100). It is told that when a saintly man was once asked, 'How can I believe as you do, so that I may act as you do,' he replied with fine psychological insight, 'Act as I do and you will believe as I do.' The Bible tells us that when the children of Israel at Sinai expressed their readiness to accept the Law they exclaimed, 'Na'aseh V'nishma', 'we will do that we may comprehend'. Action influences theory more than theory stimulates action".*

* A Paper delivered at the session devoted to the Teaching of Moral and Spiritual Values, Conference on the Role of the Public Schools in Dealing with Religion, sponsored by the Joint Advisory Committee on Religion and the Public Schools of the Synagogue Council of America and the NCRAC, New York, (10/26/54)

Another proponent of teaching moral and ethical values without relying on religious sanction states, "It is not the task of the teacher or the public school to create or to adumbrate a supernaturally-grounded ethic. This leads obviously to sectarianism and besides it is an impossible task for teachers of different religious commitments to fulfill. But a teacher may and should be encouraged to help young people arrive at moral decisions regarding fairness, honesty, goodness, unselfishness ... based on sanctions derived from law and justice and integrity and their pragmatic value to human brotherhood. This can and should be done in the public schools."*

Such an approach does not preclude a teacher from referring to the religious origin of a specific ethical value or even of stating that such an ideal lies at the core of our major religious faiths. For example, no one would object to a teacher stating that the moral concept of "love thy neighbor" was expressed in the Old Testament (Leviticus XIX) and in the New Testament. Nor would one object if this teacher stated that other great religious systems give expression to the same ideal. Thus, for example, Buddhism states, "Minister to friends and families by treating them as one treats himself"; Confucianism states, "What you do not like done to yourself do not do to others"; and Hinduism states, "Let no man do another what would be repugnant to himself". Nor does such an approach preclude a teacher from stating that some people believe this value (love thy neighbor) flows from a belief in God but that there are other persons who believe that it flows from the natural development of man's relationship to man in a democratic society. Such a presentation is a far cry from dogmatically insisting that one can understand the concept of "love thy neighbor" only by believing in a supernatural God or in belief that the concept has validity only in the framework of religious dogma.

Below we have briefly outlined some of the other moral concepts which give meaning and substance to the democratic ideal. By no means is this list intended to be complete or original. It is intended rather to explain the kind of moral and ethical values that must be projected in public education and to demonstrate that each of these is important in and of itself -- without relying on religious sanction for its meaning and value.

The Inherent Worth of Each Individual

The fundamental moral and ethical ideal of the American creed is a belief in the inherent worth of every human being -- and its corollaries the ideal of equality and the brotherhood of man.

This philosophy makes it imperative that we view people not as an unimportant dispensable mass but as a group of individuals each important unto himself -- each with the potential within himself of acquiring knowledge, of

* Rabbi Leonard Beirman, "A Tentative Statement on the Teaching of Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools"

expressing ideas and aspirations through various media of creativity -- and of developing a sense of moral responsibility to himself, to his family and to the world community.

It is a philosophy that demands that a man be judged without regard to color, creed, or national origin. Caste, class, slavery, prejudice, discrimination and bigotry have no place within the framework of such a philosophy. It challenges every form of oppression. It implies that each human being should have every opportunity to achieve, by his own efforts, a feeling of security and fulfilment. It proclaims without qualification that: "Every man is precious simply because he is a man. Every man is precious because he is himself and no other."*

In educational terms, this value requires a "school system which, by making freely available the common heritage of human association and human culture, opens to every child the opportunity to grow to his full physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual stature. It favors those plans of school organization and instruction which recognize and meet the varying needs and aspirations of individuals. By exploring and acknowledging the capacities of each child, education seeks to develop all his creative powers to encourage him to feel that he can do things of value, that he belongs, and that he is wanted. It discourages every tendency toward despotism ... It endeavors to arouse in each individual a profound sense of self-respect and personal integrity".**

A Concern for Others

An inescapable counterpart of a belief in the inherent dignity of each individual -- is an understanding of the responsibility that human beings have toward one another. Only those who are really committed to the concept of the dignity and equality of all men can understand the need for every man to be concerned, not only with his own needs and interests, but with the common good. This concept was best expressed by Hillel in the famous query "If I am not for myself who will be; but if I am for for myself alone - what am I?"

In today's world in which each of us is so dependent upon each other for existence and survival -- it is essential that we develop in our children a sense of responsibility and concern for the well being of all people -- even those far removed from our immediate

* Education and American Civilization, George S.Counts, Teachers College, Columbia University,New York,(1952)p.222.

** Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools, cited supra, p.19.

circle of involvement. A child must learn that he cannot draw the shades on his picture window and isolate himself from the problems of his community, his nation and his world. An understanding of this sense of responsibility requires more than a willingness to share with the less fortunate. It requires a concern with attacking the causes of want and suffering. It calls for an understanding of responsibilities of citizenship in a free society -- of the need for citizens to actively participate in organizations and programs that work toward these ends. In short, it requires that we impart to our children an understanding of the fiat that we must wish "for ourselves nothing that we are unwilling to help achieve for others."

Creativity and Learning

A belief in the inherent worth of each human being presupposes a belief that every man has within himself the possibilities of creation -- both physical and intellectual. One of the major ethical values to be imparted through education is the belief that human beings have a responsibility to develop their inner potential and the uniqueness of personality with which each of us is blessed. An individual realizes the full measure of his human dignity and creativeness. We are fulfilling our responsibility as a human being if we understand that the ability to learn, to create, to change and to transform is perhaps the most basic difference between man and the rest of the animal kingdom.

Freedom

The ethical concept of freedom is not an easy one to understand and project. There are many facets of freedom -- political, economic and personal freedom, each with its own imperatives, limitations and goals. It is a concept that has intrigued the mind of man for all recorded history.

Webster defines freedom as "not being under another's control -- having liberty to act or to think as one pleases ... A man is free in the sense that he has the moral right to determine his own destiny within the limits of his capacity and within the limitations of the society in which he resides." The last phrase becomes the critical one. It underscores the fact that there can be no unbridled freedom. Man can only be free to act as long as his actions do not impair the well being of those around him. A man is not free to yell fire in a crowded theatre and cause panic. Man is not free to subjugate or to exploit his fellow men or to subject them to tyranny or despotism. Man is free to act only when his actions do not harm or impair the security and the happiness of those with whom he lives. Freedom, therefore, must have limita-

tions and the great debates of all the ages have centered on exploring these limitations -- and on deciding where such limitations should be created and by whom and when.

Freedom, too, requires the right to think freely, even when our thinking does not coincide with the accepted thoughts of the community as a whole. It is essential, therefore, for the teacher to encourage the discussion of controversial issues in the classroom in an atmosphere of free and earnest inquiry. It must be clearly understood that on most issues of controversy there are few right answers that can be settled in advance. Divergent views -- individual judgment -- objective analysis -- these must become part of classroom discussion. In such an atmosphere a child becomes exposed to the imperatives of freedom and understands the need not only to think freely but to form independent judgments -- an essential requirement for the proper functioning of democracy. In such an atmosphere a child must also learn to respect differences and to understand that all ideas have the right to compete in a free market place of ideas -- and that narrow and rigid conformity has no place in a democratic society.

Institutions As the Servants of Men

The democratic ideal is based on the philosophic concept that institutions (whether they are domestic, cultural or political) have justification only if they contribute to the growth and enrichment of human life. This ethical value is the cornerstone of the American concept of government -- a value that requires that governments exist only to achieve the inalienable rights of all men, and are created by men -- "deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed". These declarations have become so much a part of our American way of life that we forget that these concepts have done more to advance human freedom than any other single philosophic idea. They are diametrically opposed to the authoritarian organization of the Communist state which believes that the group not the individual is the supreme end. In such a social order the worth of the individual, except as a servant or an instrument of the state is, in fact, denied. With half of the world officially upholding this concept of man's relationship to institutions and to the group, it becomes increasingly important that the democratic ideal of "institutions as the servants of men" be understood by our children.

Morality and Love

The philosophy of democracy presupposes that man is a moral creature living in a moral order. He is endowed with intelligence and can distinguish between right and wrong. He is accountable for his behaviour. He fulfills his nature not by living a life of impulse, caprice or sensual satisfaction or expediency, but by striving to do good, to develop his own potential, to do justice, to be generous, to help the unfortunate, to show mercy and compassion toward the weak, to understand the meaning of love, and to "love his neighbor as himself". The man who does these things is a moral man -- the ultimate expression of the creative process on earth.

This concept has validity and meaning whether or not one believes in a supernatural God as the source of such morality. In November, 1950, Bertrand Russell delivered a series of lectures before a university audience on ethics and morals in human society. Known to his generation as a critic of supernaturalism in all its forms, he paid unqualified tribute to the concept of love and compassion as the core of human morality: "The root of the matter is a very simple and old-fashioned thing, a thing so simple that I am almost ashamed to mention it, for fear of the derisive smile with which wise cynics will greet my words. The thing I mean -- please forgive me for mentioning it -- is love ... or compassion. If you feel this, you have a motive for existence, a guide in action, a reason for courage and imperative necessity for intellectual honesty ... Although you may not find happiness, you will never know the deep despair of those whose life is aimless and void of purpose; for there is always something that you can do to diminish the awful sum of human misery".*

What Do These Values Mean to the Children?

In 1955, Mills College (California),** in conjunction with the Office of Human Relations of the Oakland Public Schools, conducted a study in the elementary school grades to discover what the moral and ethical values as described in the pamphlet produced by the Educational Policies Commission of the NEA (values not fundamentally different from the values we discussed above) meant to the boys and girls in the intermediate grades and to get an expression of each child's concept of these values in a simple and direct statement. Discussions were held primarily with a group of sixth grade boys and girls.

* Education and American Civilization, cited supra, p.27

** The Use of Literature in the Teaching of Moral and Spiritual Values, a study conducted by Oakland Public Schools in conjunction with Mills College, (1955) available in mimeographed form from office of Director of Education in Human Relations, Oakland, California.

While it was a voluntary group, it consisted of interested pupils who showed by their daily living that they appreciated and were sensitive to the values to be considered. The problem was presented to them as that of "helping to express certain ideas so that boys and girls their age and younger would understand what was meant". Each value was presented, using the terminology of the commission. Its meaning was discussed, illustrations were given and every effort was made to be sure that all the children understood the value discussed. Then when the group had arrived at some common understanding, the children attempted to write their statement so that it would express quite simply what they believe was the important idea embodied in the value.

The concept of "the inherent worth of the human personality" was translated by the children to mean, "Every individual personality is important. Each one is important to himself and should be treated with respect by others". The concept of moral responsibility was interpreted to mean, "I must learn to be self-reliant, to think for myself and to make wise choices". The idea that institutions are the servants of men was implied to mean, "I will not think only of myself but I will serve my group unselfishly". The idea of common consent was translated to mean, "I will abide by the decisions of my group and will help to make group decisions". The ethical concept of "devotion to truth" was restated by the children as follows: "I will have a sincere respect for truth; I will tell others the truth as I see it; when I face a problem I will hunt for information and opinions before I make my decision". Respect for excellence was interpreted to mean, "I want to be proud of my work, my appearance and my behaviour". Equality was translated, "I will treat others as I wish to be treated. I will be sympathetic, friendly and helpful and free from discrimination based on family, nationality, religion or economic status". Brotherhood was implied to mean, "I want to be friends with people of other races and of far away lands". Creativity and the pursuit of happiness was translated as, "If I try to make others happy I am very likely to find happiness myself. Happiness lies within myself; it is not to be found in things". Spiritual enrichment was interpreted to mean, "I want to be good and to do what I believe is right".

The study concludes by stating that these moral values seemed to be easily understood by the children and "they arrived at their interpretation through an understanding of every-day experiences in the school community". It is interesting to note that in no case did the children attempt to explain the moral value in terms of religious sanction or in reference to a God or in terms of religious experience.

SECTION III

The Kentucky Experiment In Teaching Moral and Ethical Values

In The Public Schools Without Relying On Religious Sanctions

Rote Recitation of Values

In the early days of the public schools, morals and ethics were taught by reading the Bible and by the rote recitation of maxims and commandments or by special lessons in character training. Typical of this approach was a program set up by a zealous school administrator in the early 1900's providing a daily lesson in character training from 9:00 AM to 9:15 AM in grades 1 to 8 inclusive. The subjects assigned were: Monday: morals; Tuesday: manners; Wednesday: respect for property; Thursday: safety; Friday: thrift and patriotism. The rationale for such a program was a simple one: "Since children should learn to deal with numbers, class time is planned for teaching arithmetic. Since children should develop approved moral and spiritual values, why not provide classes in character traits".* Such special courses in character training seem attractive also because they offer a school administration an opportunity to "do something" about the problem. Once a course has been instituted in the school program, the school administration can triumphantly announce that it is "now taking some overt action to improve the moral behaviour of its students".**

Actually, however, most educators today agree that there is little real value in such courses. Repetition of general statements does not materially increase the probability of right conduct itself. As our understanding of the learning process has developed, we have come to recognize that children do not necessarily learn by recitation; they learn primarily by absorbing and imitating the behaviour of their parents, friends, teachers and the group to which the family belongs. We know that ethical behaviour is developed by being "exposed to it", by "catching it from those around", and by "exercising it", and not by adding a course to the curriculum. The meaning of democracy, for example, can be taught most effectively not merely by reading an essay by Thomas Jefferson but by reading and discussing such an essay and at the same time applying the principles of democracy in the classroom. In such a classroom group discussion, student council meetings, independent judgment, a vote on major issues, etc. become part of a child's daily life experience rather than a special course in character training on Monday morning.

* Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools,
cited supra, p.57 (1951).

** Id, p.56

Every aspect of school instruction and administration lends itself to such an approach, and every learning discipline provides an opportunity to project an understanding of moral and ethical behaviour.

In this indirect method of imparting values, the teacher plays the critical role. The ultimate success of such a program depends largely on the teacher's understanding of the values to be imparted and on the approach which she uses. A teacher who is authoritarian, who restricts free and independent inquiry, who rejects the principles of democratic organization in her classroom -- cannot hope to impart a respect for the individual or for the democratic idea. "Only a school served by a staff whose members are themselves sensitive and responsive to moral values; a school with a broadly humane and flexible curriculum; a school steeped in a philosophy which commands respect for the personality of each child that it touches can hope to successfully impart a genuine respect for morals and ethics".* It is obvious, therefore, that the choice and training of teachers will determine the ability of any system to project moral values.

In-Service Training Courses

In-service training courses, must include as a major part of their program, a consideration of this problem. They must impart to teachers an understanding of the fact that the teaching of ethical values must be made a part of every teacher's study plan, whether the immediate subject of her concern is arithmetic, history or even athletics. In the selection of teachers, greater emphasis should be placed on the teacher's character, emotional adjustment and her sensitivity and appreciation of the moral and ethical goals of education. Scholarship and professional standing must not be the sole criterion. Workshop seminars, group discussion sessions, conferences between parents and teachers -- must all become part of an ongoing effort by the schools to develop a unified approach to this problem. This "emphasis on teacher training" is the basis of the experimental plan developed by the Kentucky Board of Education, which is discussed below.

The Kentucky Plan - A Pilot Study in Teaching Moral Values in the Public Schools.

The Kentucky program for teaching moral and spiritual values in the public schools is, we believe, the best example of how such a program can be developed without introducing religious teachings. Because we believe, moreover, that this plan sets out a procedure and approach that utilizes the most advanced educational theories -- we have outlined in detail, in the pages that follow, the steps taken by the Kentucky Department of Education in the development of this program. We suggest that this be used as a guide to other communities concerned with this problem.

* Moral and Spiritual Values in Public Education, cited supra, p.61.

The Program -- Aims and Approach

The program itself has been fittingly termed "a program of emphasis". It is no more than a consistent effort "to discover the most appropriate occasions and potential opportunities for the teaching of values".* In the words of the plan itself, it is set up to:

"Help growing persons to achieve an understanding of their relations to nature and society; to discover the moral and spiritual nature of these relations and the moral obligations involved in them in the light of the growing moral and spiritual values which man has tested through centuries of living and which are recorded in his cultural traditions; to learn to judge and control their conduct by these values; and to achieve a philosophy of life."**

Unlike other plans adopted in various states throughout the United States, the Kentucky plan provides that its program "should be based upon a complete separation of church and state".***

The plan repudiates the idea that a teacher can be helped by being provided with a curriculum guide on teaching abstract traits of morality. It deliberately avoids developing "stereotype procedures to be imposed upon the schools." It provides no course syllabi or suggested outline of study for different age groups and grade levels. Rather it provides resource material, case histories, workshops and discussion groups through which teachers and administrators can work out their own programs in the light of their own situations and experiences.

It believes that morality and spirituality are "to be experienced through discovery and through functional use in living". It believes that such a program should be made an integral part of the total school program rather than one consisting of additional courses. It believes that such a program to be effective must involve community agencies. Finally, it believes that the program has got to be "experimental" so that corrections and changes may evolve from actual experience.

* Moral Values in Public Education, Ellis Ford Hartford, Preface, Harper and Brothers, New York, (1958).

** Id at pg.5.

*** Kentucky Pioneers, J.Mansir Tydings reprinted from Religious Education, July-August 1956, pg.4

The Beginning Plan of Action

The program itself was instituted by the Kentucky Committee on Moral and Spiritual Education composed of laymen and educators appointed by the superintendent of public instruction. J. Mansir Tydings (Director, Division of Moral and Spiritual Education, Kentucky State Dept. of Education), the man who created the idea, was named chairman. Subsequently, an advisory group of qualified educators to guide the committee in its deliberations was set up, including experts in psychiatry, curriculum, sociology and religious education.

A plan of action was developed which included initially 4 steps:

1) A conference of superintendents and heads of teachers' education institutions to discuss the plan; 2) the selection of pilot schools to cooperate in developing a suitable emphasis concerning value teachings; 3) arrangements for a summer workshop at the University of Kentucky for orientation and development of tentative approaches and material; and 4) the beginning of the experimental program at the pilot schools.*

The selection of each experimental school was based upon the interest of its superintendent and the existence of a good working relationship with a teacher-training college. The faculty of each pilot school voted to participate.

The teacher-training schools then appointed coordinators who served as resource people and, on request, offered suggestions, gave technical assistance, evaluated and took back to the colleges an active program for prospective teachers.

The first workshop on the Development of Moral and Spiritual Values in Education was held at the University of Kentucky, June 1949. Dr. William Clayton Bower, Professor Emeritus of Religious Education of the University of Chicago Divinity School and chairman of the advisory group, served as director. The project leaders were for the most part also members of the advisory group.

The purpose of the workshop was to orient the representatives of the experimental schools to the purpose and underlying philosophy of the program and to cooperatively develop techniques, procedures and resource material for use in the experimental schools.

There was a second general workshop at the University of Kentucky in 1950 to which the same representatives of the six pilot experimental schools came, this time to share experience growing out of applying the guiding principles adopted in the first workshop, and to make plans for the future spread of the ideas.

* Moral Values in Public Education, cited supra pg.7.

During the three years following, regional workshops were held at all of the state colleges, the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville. "Thus the movement spread, slowly but surely; always because of the convictions and concerns of both parents and teachers".

The cooperating colleges were encouraged by the State Department of Education to become live centres of the movement. They set up extension courses for in-service training of teachers in many communities, and incorporated an emphasis on moral and spiritual values, as an integral part of the college program for the students in preparation for teaching.

The Initial Workshops

The workshops that were initially set up considered five aspects of this problem.*

1. Social analysis of the school community: The purpose of this group was to discover the relations, functions and behaviour situations which pupils, teachers and administrators encounter in living and working together in the school as a community. The group found that such an analysis involved use of two techniques: a) for the discovery and listing, with descriptions, of behaviour situations in which moral and spiritual values are generated; b) for dealing with these situations, once they have been discovered, through analysis of the situations for the factors and possible outcomes in the light of the tested moral and spiritual values in the cultural tradition, the making of choices and the carrying of these choices through into action.
2. Analysis of curriculum content: This group undertook three tasks: an analysis of the curriculum as found in most Kentucky schools; a statement of values essential for creative and democratic living; and a search for these values in the content of the curriculum.

For this purpose the group separated the course of study into the subjects that have to do with the cultural heritage: the humanities (language, music, art, literature), the social sciences (history, geography, civics, economics, social studies, problems of democracy), the natural sciences (astronomy, geology, chemistry, physics, biology, physiology), mathematics (arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry), and the life adjustment subjects falling under vocational exploratory areas (agriculture, industrial arts, commercial

* Moral and Spiritual Education in Kentucky, Educational Bulletin, Vol. XXVI, (Jan. 1958) No. 1, pg. 8.

subjects, home economics, health, physical education). This analysis yielded a wealth of moral and spiritual values when these are not injected into the curriculum but dealt with objectively and normally when and as they occur as constituent elements of the great cultural traditions.

3. Personal and group counseling: This group was convinced in dealing with cases that most adjustment problems involve, in one way or another, moral and spiritual values in their resolution. For this reason, counseling offers a particularly rich field for the discovery and development of moral and spiritual values. The group felt that the function of counseling is to free the ability of the pupil to meet his own problems by viewing them in a new light and by re-examining his values. With this in view, the various techniques of counseling were studied and appraised, and the place of counseling in the program was explored.
4. Sports and recreation: This group found that the area of sports and recreation is particularly replete with specific and concrete behaviour situations and because of the vividness of its experiences offers a most fruitful field for the discovery and development of moral and spiritual values. The group listed these potential values and suggested principles for the guidance of coaches, administrators and participants, together with an athletic policy for which the entire school is responsible, along with criteria for judging such a policy.
5. Symbolic expression: This group explored the function of symbols as means of giving concrete expression to moral and spiritual values and of rendering them communicable and capable of being reproduced in the growing experience of pupils and the school community. Instead of imposing stereotyped slogans, ceremonials and celebrations upon the school, the group examined the possibility of developing creatively suitable living symbolic expressions of these values as they are generated in the school experience and of utilizing, whenever appropriate, the great historic art forms, ceremonials and celebrations.

Each of these project groups assembled a considerable volume of case histories drawn from actual school experience. This material was distributed to the schools as the beginning of a compilation of source material that could be used as a guide in establishing their own programs.

Cooperation with University of Kentucky

The University of Kentucky has played a key role in the development of this program. In addition to the workshops held at the school, the University has increased its emphasis on values in its teacher education program -- both in graduate and undergraduate courses, seminars and conferences. An extension course has been inaugurated as a workshop for teachers already in the school system. These workshops are held in places convenient to the teachers -- in Columbia, Nicholasville, Georgetown, Somerset and various other cities throughout the state.

How Does the Plan Work in a Pilot School

Bourbon County Vocational High School, in 1949, accepted an invitation to work with the University of Kentucky as a pilot high school in the Kentucky movement to develop a program for moral and spiritual values. Dr. Ellis F. Hartford of the University of Kentucky College of Education was the consultant throughout this experiment. Because the approach used by this school is typical of the approach used by most of the pilot schools in this experiment -- we have devoted the remaining pages of this chapter to a step-by-step analysis of how this program was put into effect in this school.

1. The pilot school was a new central high school for the Bourbon County School System and at the time of the experiment the enrollment was approximately three hundred. This school offered the regular academic courses plus agriculture, home economics, and commercial courses. There were sixteen teachers in the school.
2. During the summer of 1949 the first workshop in Moral and Spiritual Values was held at the University of Kentucky. Seven teachers and the principal from this pilot school attended and made plans for getting the program underway in the fall term.
3. As soon as possible after the start of the school year those who attended the workshop explained to the other members of the faculty the plans that had been made there. Alternate weeks were set aside for faculty meetings in which they discussed this "new emphasis" in education. In reporting this, Leonard C. Taylor, the principal, stated: "We realized this was an emphasis and not a new subject to be added to the curriculum. As our discussions progressed we found that we had been emphasizing moral and spiritual values from the beginning. In fact, we discovered that good teachers had always been emphasizing such values; but needed only to learn how to do it more effectively and to be more sensitive to a greater range of values." *

* Moral and Spiritual Education in Kentucky, Educational Bulletin, cited supra, pg.18.

4. The idea was then presented to the student body, their parents and the community in general. It was decided that the principal would present the thinking of the faculty to the student body in a special assembly program. This was done in a concise manner. The students then returned to their home rooms for a full exploration of this emphasis on values with their home-room teachers. The student body was interested and actually led the way many times in the development of values in the school and community life.
5. In acquainting the community with this new emphasis the principal and several teachers spoke, or presented a panel before many community groups as well as several state-wide groups.
6. The local Parent Teacher Association was extremely interested and as the program progressed they noted its benefits in the lives of their children.
7. Faculty meetings were presided over by the principal, and freedom of expression in their meetings was understood to be one of the prime factors for success in the planning and developing of the program. Each meeting of the faculty brought up problems which were worked out, so as to produce moral and spiritual values in the school. As the year progressed teachers began to relate these meetings' experiences in their classes or in the school where values had been developed.
8. The faculty found the best time to teach or emphasize values was when the occasion arose, whether it be in a literature class, in the gym, on the playground, in the corridors, or in an assembly. "We discovered that if we let occasion pass without emphasizing values that that opportunity was gone forever. Values cannot be developed at any set or given time."*
9. The teachers, moreover, became increasingly sensitive to finding values in their subject matter. Soon they were deliberately planning for emphasizing values in their academic work.
10. The librarian began to select new books which emphasized better human relationships, racial and religious tolerance, and understanding of social problems. She helped students select books which better served their particular circumstances as she observed them in the study hall.
11. The social science teacher led his classes in working upon such community problems as divorce and drinking. The pupils wrote papers on such topics as "Purposes of Living", and "Going to School". The group devoted time to discussing desirable characteristics and qualities of the "ideal student".

* Moral and Spiritual Education in Kentucky, Educational Bulletin, cited supra, pg.21.

"This teacher always emphasized the value of common everyday courtesy. Often he brought up a real life problem and raised questions or created situations which led to thinking about choice among values".*

12. The physical education teacher brought her classes to the point where the students would select their own activities from a basic tentative program. The groups regularly chose persons to handle equipment and made their own safety rules for playing games.

13. Even the athletic coach used his program to project values. On the day of a game he once said, "You know, it doesn't make so much difference whether we win this game tonight or not, but it is important the way these boys come to look at life five or ten years from now. I set up high standards in preparation for games and I don't mind using discipline if needed. If a boy learns to fight hard, when to accept quietly, when to take hold and when to let go, I will have helped him win the real game." **

Kentucky's Respect for the Principle of Separation of Church and State.

In discussing the reason for the success of the Kentucky Plan, J. Mansir Tydings concludes that the "Kentucky experiment has worked out well because it was based on the determination to uphold a principle, a principle which underlies much of the success of our American system of government, namely separation of church and state".***

Mr. Tydings goes on to explain that from the start the persons developing the Kentucky program recognized that their school program could not and must not in any way compete with or be a substitute for the religious instruction provided by the church and synagogue. "We wanted no sectarianism in our schools and clearly it was not our business to teach theology."****

They rejected too, the idea of trying to teach a so-called "non-sectarian" religious common denominator;- "to attempt this we felt would only produce a watered down religion unacceptable to all faiths."

* Id, at p.22.

** Moral and Spiritual Education in Kentucky, Educational Bulletin, cited supra, pg.22.

*** Kentucky Pioneers, cited supra, pg.4.

**** Id at p.4.

They recognized however, that when children are learning which ways of behaviour are acceptable and which are not they are bound to ask, sooner or later, "Why" or "Who says so"? At this point the teacher is called upon to find sanctions or high authority for the moral code whereby young people are expected to live. Most of the states' moral and spiritual values programs call upon the sanction of a supernatural God. "In Kentucky", Mr. Tydings states, "we adopted a different approach".* In this lies the uniqueness of the Kentucky plan. The sanctions adopted by the Kentucky plan are not religious sanctions. Instead, they are sanctions derived from "law, justice, property rights, group approval and other democratically accepted ideas, not excluding the pupils' personal religious convictions."**

At the core of this program is the belief that while these values may have originally stemmed from religious concepts - they have now been absorbed into the whole fabric of our existence - and do not depend for their validity on their religious origin. Such a position moreover, does not negate the importance or the fundamental meaning of religion. On the contrary, it is predicated on the simple supposition that religion is not the sole repository of ethical teaching. It has no monopoly on ethical imperatives. In fact, the effectiveness of religious teachings can be measured by how widely its ideas have been absorbed by other disciplines. This approach has enabled Kentucky to make the teaching of moral and ethical values an integral part of the school curriculum and at the same time not impinge "upon the educative responsibilities of the church, synagogue and the home, through the indoctrination of sectarian religion into the curriculum".***

Summation

The principal at Bourbon High School after the first two years of this program summarized the procedures used as follows: "I would like to suggest the following procedure to a principal interested in getting this moral and spiritual emphasis working in a school:

- "1.You will have need of a period of self-examination to see what you really believe the function of education to be. If you deeply feel this emphasis is needed in your school, then you can go to a second step.
- "2.You and your faculty should thoroughly discuss this program in the light of the experiences of others who have pioneered in this field and in the light of your own experiences and philosophy. Read what has been written in the field.
- "3.Some faculty members should attend a college extension course or workshop where this course is offered during a summer session to get the thinking of a cross section of educators.

* Kentucky Pioneers, cited supra p.4.

** Id at p.4.

*** Kentucky Pioneers, cited supra p.6.

- "4. Frequently faculty meetings with freedom of expression are necessary in which teachers bring their pupil problems for full discussion before the group. Always try to agree on a plan of procedure for the development of desirable values.
- "5. Acquaint the student body with the program and solicit their interest and cooperation. Talk with your Parent Teacher Associations and get their support.
- "6. Start in day-to-day behaviour problems, or any type of student problems, and try to work them out as a teacher, principal, or a faculty group to emphasize moral and spiritual values.
- "7. Do not wait for crisis decisions. Values can be developed in crisis situations but few values will be developed if you wait only for such times to appear. The day-to-day problems of scheduling, absenteeism, teacher-pupil relations, teacher-principal relations, assembly programs, assembly conduct, conduct in study hall, etc. offer excellent examples of places to begin.
- "8. Above all else, remember that values can be taught only as situations for teaching them arise. You do not announce in class that you are going to teach the value of honesty today. You select your material and create the situation for teaching this value or you wait until a situation arises in which this value can be emphasized.
- "9. Be sensitive to the opportunities which present themselves to emphasize values. Do not let the opportunity pass without taking advantage of it. Emphasize the value without mentioning what you are doing."*

CONCLUSION

An analysis of the Kentucky plan clearly demonstrates that it is possible and practicable for a school system to teach morals and ethics without introducing religious dogma. It proves, too, that the most effective way to do this is not by introducing artificial techniques such as specific day-to-day study plans in morality for teachers, or special curricular courses in morals, or Bible reading, etc. It suggests rather that a school system develop a sensitivity to this problem and provide its teachers, pupils and the community with an opportunity to explore these values and develop a program consistent with the needs of the school.

* Moral and Spiritual Education in Kentucky,
cited supra, pp. 22-23.

We submit that the Kentucky plan is the kind of plan that our State Boards of Education should begin to adopt. It respects the principle of separation of church and state and assures that our schools will not be converted into institutions for the propagation of different religious faiths. It in no way imposes religious conformity or religious ideas upon its children.

We suggest, therefore, that parents and teachers concerned with the adoption of moral and ethical values programs in the public schools of their areas urge the school administrators to consider adopting programs similar to the Kentucky plan. We suggest that they urge that workshops be held, conferences be set up, pilot schools chosen and that parents, teachers and pupils be involved in development of a really meaningful program in this area -- one that respects the religious integrity of all its children and respects with equal vigor, the ideology of the non-believer. Only such a program can assure a continued commitment to the constitutional guarantees of religious freedom and separation of church and state and at the same time fulfill the prime responsibility of public education, e.g., to provide guidance and direction to young people in the formulation of a moral and ethical way of life.

3/6/59

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CHRISTIAN TEACHING AND ANTI-SEMITISM

Scrutinizing Religious Texts

by James Brown

**

Traditionally, the study of anti-Semitism was concerned with the objective factors which over the centuries have contributed to Christian hostility toward Jews. In particular the religious sources of this hostility were emphasized. Anti-Semitism was seen as the consequence of the fundamental point of conflict between the two traditions -- that Christians affirm, while Jews deny, that Jesus is God's Messiah -- a conflict which was exacerbated by such other contributory features as the frequent misrepresentation of Jews and Judaism in Christian teaching. Since Hitler, however, it has been recognized that the religious explanation is unable to account for the hold that anti-Semitism may have on an individual, or on a whole people. The more recent tendency has consequently been to describe anti-Semitism chiefly in sociological or psychological terms, and to focus attention on the subjective factors involved.

Thus, from the side of social psychology, Dr. Eva Reichmann, in her pioneer work Hostages of Civilisation, argued persuasively that the historical factors which had played a part in the development of the "Jewish problem" in Germany would never have produced the violent anti-Semitism of the Nazi movement had it not been for the social disorganization that followed upon the First World War. Then in 1950 there appeared The Authoritarian Personality, the principal volume in the Studies in Prejudice. The authors of this important work were a group of psychologists at the University of California, and their concern was not so much with the anti-Semite specifically, as with the broader problem of the individual "whose structure is such as to render him particularly susceptible to anti-democratic propaganda". But the authors assumed that anti-Semitism "is based more largely upon factors in the subject and in his total situation than upon actual characteristics of Jews, and that one place to look for determinants of antisemitic opinions is within the persons who express them".

A number of institutions both here and abroad have recently undertaken to study textbooks of Christian religious instruction, with a view to determining how much currency they give to inaccurate or misleading ideas about Jews and Jewish history. Discussing some of the findings to date, JAMES BROWN points out that a proper revision of offending textual material can do much to promote understanding. Mr. Brown, a young British Bible scholar, was educated at Oxford and also attended Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati as an Interfaith Fellow. Readers will recall his article "The New Old Testament" in our April 1956 number.

These valuable new insights, however, have not superseded the older approach. No one has yet asserted that the character structure of the individual by itself is the cause of anti-Semitism. Psychological and sociological factors are the driving force behind the thoughts and actions of the prejudiced man, but these thoughts and actions are moulded and nourished by historical and religious conditions. Anti-Semitism is at one and the same time an "objective" and a "subjective" phenomenon.

Indeed, the new emphasis on the part played by character structure in anti-Semitism has served to stimulate a renewed concern with the religious factor itself, and particularly with the religious education of the child. This has been one of the many important consequences of the evidence in The Authoritarian Personality that prejudice is usually developed early in life. Favorable contact in childhood with members of other groups can act as a barrier to the birth of prejudice, and for very many Christians their first -- and sometimes their only -- contact with Jews comes in their early religious training. At this stage impressions can be planted which, years later, their origins forgotten and their presence unsuspected, can grow into sentiments of affection and respect towards Judaism, or of hostility and resentment.

In England, the Council of Christians and Jews, with the aid of a panel of educators, began in 1953 a survey of a considerable number of books used in religious teaching and discussed the findings at a conference held in the fall of 1954. In America, the problem has long been a concern of the American Jewish Committee which for over two decades cooperated with members of Drew University in a general study of the effect of religious teachings on intergroup relations. This work has led to an investigation by various institutions within each of the major religious groups in America of teaching materials used by Jews, Protestants, and Catholics. The major study (of Protestant texts) is being conducted at the Yale Divinity School, while Dropsie College in Philadelphia is looking into Jewish textbooks and St. Louis University into Roman Catholic. Two other studies -- by Southern Methodist University and by the Catholic University of America and the Catholic Bible Association -- have also been undertaken in cooperation with the American Jewish Committee. But it may be some time before the results of all these American studies are available.

At present, the fullest treatment of the problem is to be found in La Catéchèse Chrétienne et Le Peuple de la Bible (The Christian Catechism and the People of the Bible)* by Paul Démann, a Roman Catholic priest, whose name is a respected one in interfaith circles in France. Fr. Démann examines a large number of the textbooks used in the religious schools of French-speaking Roman Catholic parishes (i.e. in France, Belgium, Switzerland and

* This study forms vols. 3 and 4 of Cahiers Sioniens (1952), a periodical devoted to interfaith work between Christians and Jews, and to the Jewish heritage of Christianity.

Canada), and the quotations he cites often provide a sorry picture for Christians -- although it should be said that some of the anti-Semitism revealed appears to be political, rather than religious, in origin. There is also the further point that, according to Fr. Démann, many of the more recent books to come into use reveal a very different spirit. This judgment would in my opinion also be true of conditions in America and England, where the newer books are similarly marked by an emphasis on the Jewish origins of Christianity, a desire to pay tribute to the spirit of Judaism at the time of Jesus, and a sympathetic handling of problems such as the crucifixion story.

It is in connection with the crucifixion that the problem of religious anti-Semitism is posed in its sharpest form, for nothing can more quickly create sentiments of antipathy toward Jews in children than the grotesque simplification of the story into the statement that the "Jews killed Jesus" -- however much the particular author may wish to guard against anti-Semitism. Historically, several factors played a part in the crucifixion -- Roman civilization, the religious zeal of the Pharisees, the patriotism of those among the Jewish masses who were looking for a warrior messiah to drive the Romans into the sea, and Jesus' own conviction that his death was not a casual historical accident, but part of the age-old purpose of God, so that he dies "as it was written".

To explain so complex a situation to children is, of course, very difficult, and it is made even more difficult by two other factors. The first is that in the period during which the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles were being written, Judaism was in a state of crisis that resulted from the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., and this crisis showed itself partly in the persecution -- at times to the death -- of Christians (then still regarded as Jewish heretics) and their exclusion from the synagogue. It is not therefore remarkable that the Gospels should occasionally reflect this tense situation and give an unfavorable picture of contemporary Jewry; and one of the purposes of the author of Acts was apparently to persuade the Roman government that Christianity was an essentially law-abiding religion, with trouble only arising when Jews came on the scene.

If Judaism, then, was engaged in detaching itself from Christianity in the 1st century, some of the writers of the New Testament were also actively engaged in detaching themselves from contemporary Judaism. This much must be said. But secondly, it is no less true that there was a real and significant opposition on the part of Jesus to much of the religion of his day. There was a crucifixion, and some Jews did have a connection with it; and this too must in all honesty be said.

The usual over-simplification of the crucifixion story in teaching manuals takes the form of putting responsibility squarely and indiscriminately on the shoulders of the mass of Jews:

Pilate gave the Jews the choice between Jesus and Barabbas ... the Jews chose Barabbas, and asked for Jesus to be put to death.

We become indignant at the machinations of the Jews, the willingness of Judas to be their catspaw, and of Pilate to be their tool.

Herod refused to have anything to do with the matter, and sent Jesus back to Pilate, who ordered a scourging to be inflicted (hoping thus to satisfy the Jews). This did not satisfy them. "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" they howled. And Pilate dared not oppose them.

Sometimes the effect is to establish an association of "Jews" with "enemies of Jesus".

The whole crowd followed ... the majority of them were Jews, his enemies, who wished to see him die.

In order to undertake a complete and impartial study of the life of Jesus, we have to consult those texts which are concerned with him, whether they come from his enemies, those indifferent to him, or from his friends: i.e. Jewish, Roman and Christian sources.

But Jews may not only be equated with "enemies of Jesus"; they may also be "wicked". There is a warning note to the teacher in one book, for younger children:

Do not use the expression "the wicked soldiers who were ill-treating Jesus", without taking care that the children do not identify "to be a soldier" with "to be wicked".

There is nothing, however, to forbid the phrase being applied to Jews, and, in fact, the teacher is told:

One should not speak of "wicked soldiers", but of "wicked Jews". In the Passion narrative the soldiers should be treated as simply doing what they are ordered to do.

And other books cited by Fr. Démann contain such incidental statements as: "Now those wicked men -- they were Jews -- spoke thus"; "But the Jews were pitiess, and clamored 'Crucify Him'"; "the heart of the Jews was as stone"; "the wretched Jews ... took pleasure in seeing Jesus suffer". (The AJC Committee Reporter for July 1956 likewise notices the collocation of the epithets "immoral", "materialistic", "self-seeking", "proud", "deceitful", "wicked", with the term "Jew" in many Christian texts.)

But since the Gospels do not present the Jews as standing united in opposition to Jesus, these accounts are forced to play down the Jewishness of the "good Jews". The mother of Jesus, for example, is described as "a young woman espoused to a man named Joseph", and she is said to have lived "in the country of the Jews". Of the Apostles, the children are told that Jesus "chose twelve men". Another Jew well disposed toward Jesus becomes simply "a man".

The two Pharisees who became disciples of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus, are referred to as "two pious men". A rather longer passage from a very widely used manual is a reductio ad absurdum of this tendency to obscure the fact that virtually all the first Christians were themselves Jews:

Who was on the side of Jesus? The sick he had healed, the unhappy that he had comforted, the poor he had associated with, the children he had blessed, the guilty he had pardoned -- all those who loved the gospel and wanted to hear further teaching about God. Who was against Jesus? The Jews who looked for a glorious Saviour ...

The effect such teaching can have on the impressionable minds of children is clear.

There are, however, other authors who try to bring out with delicacy, sympathy, and imagination the true Christian perspective on the crucifixion. A British author remarks:

We must make it plain to our hearers that the whole blame for the crucifixion cannot be put on the shoulders of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Romans, and the Jewish populace of the time. The contemporaries of Jesus must, of course, share the blame; they were the historical agents of human sin. But they were acting on behalf of us all; they were doing what we should have done if we had been there to do it ... It would be pleasant to put the blame on Pontius Pilate, or Judas, or Caiaphas; but the attempt to shift the blame always breaks down in the end, and all who see the love of Jesus on the Cross are brought to acknowledge that it was they who crucified Him, whatever anyone else may have done towards it.

An American author likewise insists on an accurate statement of the historical evidence:

When we speak of the Crucifixion, we must be careful to guard our teaching so that we do not give the impression that the Jews crucified Christ. The Romans had a part in it also. The Jewish people as a whole did not crucify Him, but certain religious leaders and the rougher element of the population.*

* This quotation (which stems from material of the Evangelical and Reformed Church) is reported to be a revision of older material which read, "When Jesus was arrested, the first place to which He was taken was the High Court of the Jews, presided over by the High Priest. Its members belonged to the aristocratic families of Jerusalem. According to the Jewish law, Jesus claiming to be the son of God, should be punished by death".

And another American, a Catholic, bluntly says: "A Christian believes that his own sins were the cause of the crucifixion".

From French Catholic sources there are two further examples of how this difficult subject can be handled without either distorting the facts or arousing the child's antagonism to Jews:

If a child interrupts the lesson and says, "The wicked men", point out to him that it is he himself who is wicked, like all of us, and that it was because of our sins that Jesus died.

Who was responsible for the sufferings of Jesus ... was it only the people who were there, Caiaphas, Pilate, etc.? This question is very important if we are to grasp the meaning of what happened. No, those who were there were not responsible above all others ... indeed they were only the agents of the consequence of the sin of us all ... It is each one of us who is responsible. We must firmly say that it is our sins which were the true cause of the sufferings of our Saviour. Those who were there were only sinners like the rest of us, and it was for us as well as for them that Jesus suffered.

But what of the Jewish rejection of Jesus? The Christian must take the view that historical Israel, once the organ of special revelation, has been transformed by the coming of Jesus into a community that includes anyone -- Jew or Gentile -- who submits to the Law of Christ. Transformation, however, implies a certain continuity: a Christian cannot, without falling into inconsistency and error, believe that Judaism was finally and completely rejected in the coming of Jesus, but only that it was superseded. Yet some manuals make it appear that there is a radical discontinuity between Judaism and Christianity. We read, for example, in one book, that "for Christianity to establish itself, it was necessary that Judaism should disappear". This kind of falsification easily passes over into the presentation of Jews as members of a cast-off race, inexorably damned by an irrevocable divine decree. Thus an American writer:

The Jews turned their backs on God, they refused His Son and they worshipped pagan gods. And they have been sorely punished for centuries as a result ... They are not really wanted anywhere.

In another author we find a similar idea:

Jerusalem and the Jews were visibly punished by God ... The temple was destroyed, and with it, the Mosaic religion came to an end. Since then the Jews have wandered through the whole earth, homeless and without a country.

The same sentiment is given a particularly ugly turn when Jesus is said to have predicted "the destruction of Jerusalem and of the nation of deicides".

Why, then, do Jews still exist today? "To provide the world with the most tangible evidence of divine justice", one author tells us. "As an instance of the wrath of God", says another. "God preserves them", teaches a third, "so that they may continue to expiate their national crime ..."

What sort of justice this can be which thinks in terms of a collective guilt extending now over some nineteen centuries it is hard to understand. And this whole way of thinking is open to criticism at so many other points that we are not surprised to learn from Fr. Démann that it finds much less place in recent books than in those of twenty or thirty years ago. For not only does the existence of the State of Israel make nonsense of the idea of the "homeless Jews", but, to controvert statements which interpret the Jewish dispersion as a punishment for the crucifixion, we have ample evidence that Jews were to be found all over the Mediterranean world long before the birth of Jesus. Christianity, indeed, has traditionally seen in this pre-Christian dispersion more a blessing than a curse, since Jews in the Hellenistic countries, by spreading the knowledge of Scripture, helped prepare the way for the new faith.

But in any case, where the New Testament sees the crucifixion as the revelation of a principle of love, this interpretation makes it a principle of hatred and division. Finally, while Christians cannot be expected to ignore the stern sayings of Jesus about the judgment that must fall on those who have rejected him, the idea of irrevocable rejection fails to take account of St. Paul's picture in Romans 11:29 of a God who does not "go back on His gifts and His call" but wills to reunite both Christian and Jew in the fellowship of the Church.

If the New Testament presupposes at every point a sympathetic knowledge of the Old Testament, it also presupposes a similar acquaintance with Judaism at the time of Jesus. Certain recent authors emphasize this:

If we are to understand the life and acts of Jesus, his teaching, and the reception He received from his contemporaries, it is essential that the gospel story be seen against its historical background.

Other authors pay tribute to the vigor of the pre-Christian Jewish dispersion, and to the success of its missionary activity, which made some headway among the adherents of the "higher paganism". But it seems that relatively few authors feel the need for providing their young readers with a sufficient account of such background information, let alone of the vigorous and diverse development of Judaism that took place in the period following the close of the Old Testament. Where 1st-century Judaism is mentioned, it is usually caricatured and its "inferiority" to Christianity highlighted. Here is a Canadian Protestant writer on "synagogue worship":

Think of what we know of the synagogue and its worship. From what we know of it all, it was steeped in formality and worldliness. It was superficial and unreal. Our

Lord's own words leave no doubt as to the prevailing tone of the synagogue worship, and show how much He disagreed with the teaching there.

Such worship, of course, would be no more than we could expect from a people described by another writer as "neither believing in God, nor loving Him". He continues: "The low state of morality in Jerusalem was such that (Josephus) called it 'a second Sodom'". Another book, which contains much the crudest specimens of this sort of thing, amplifies the description:

Think a little of the mentality of the people that Jesus addressed. They looked for happiness in silver and gold, in low sensuality, in empty glory, strife and revenge. Everywhere, from Jerusalem to Rome, there was one desire, one ideal: happiness and wealth, sensual pleasure, power.

It will come as no surprise after this to find that the tendency of some authors is to concentrate attention on one element of the Jewish messianic hope, and one only:

Who were against Jesus? The Jews who looked for a rich and glorious Savior, warlike and victorious, with an army ... he would triumph over their enemies and wipe them out for ever.

In a word, "this people had lost the awareness of its true vocation, and dreamed only of revenge and political dominion". Even the Apostles, an English writer tells us, were at one time "full of Jewish bigotry and prejudice". The same writer describes the people of Nazareth as "angry in their narrow Jewish way". On another occasion he makes the inevitable comment:

One imagines that there was touch of humor, of gentle irony, when Jesus said that it was Gentiles who worried about material things. No race is more keen on this than the Jews, and so when Jesus said, truly of course, that Gentiles worried about such things, His hearers could hardly miss the implication against themselves.

As one would expect, the Pharisees come off especially badly: "Most of us", remarks the English writer just quoted, "regard the Pharisees as frauds and humbugs", and he might have adduced in support of his statements the definition of "pharisaical" in Webster's Collegiate Dictionary: "Resembling the Pharisees; outwardly, but not inwardly religious: hypocritical; selfrighteous and censorious of others' manners and morals".

Here again the matter is a complicated one for Christians. There was a real controversy between Jesus and the Pharisees, but the nature of the controversy is easily misunderstood. The old Liberal Protestant school, of which Adolph Harnack of Berlin was the greatest representative in the early years of this century, tended to think of Jesus as the supreme embodiment of true religion and

morals, with the Christian gospel viewed along rather commonplace ethical lines. For this school the root of the controversy with the Pharisees was that Jesus criticized their legalism, their failure to see that moral commandments were more important than ceremonial and ritual.

Such a view (which lies behind the current misrepresentation of the Pharisees) involves rather serious difficulties in the understanding of the history. Why should the Pharisees have sought so passionately to destroy Jesus, if this were all? After all, Pharisaism knew perfectly well that, in the words of the later Rabbi Meir, "upon the intention of the heart depends the validity of the words", and the Talmud repeatedly stresses the need of kavanah (inwardness) just as it repeatedly condemns as "hypocrites" and "Pharisaic plagues" those who did not display this quality.

Influenced by the work of critics like George Foot Moore and Israel Abrahams -- who have done much to restore the reputation of the Pharisees among Christian scholars -- more recent exegesis of the Gospels is able to make sense of the hostility to Jesus. The teaching of Jesus, it is now generally recognized, was primarily messianic and only secondary ethical. He came as Messiah, not as a prophet, and as Messiah he could declare that the Torah was superseded, that it was now nothing more than a stage belonging to the past. The Pharisees, like everyone else, had to decide whether God was visiting and redeeming His people in Jesus, or whether Jesus was hopelessly deluded -- in which case his criticism of the Law must be considered a subversive attack on Judaism itself. They decided to uphold the Law against him.

Several of the authors we are considering are well aware of these new insights, and they take the obvious and surely correct position that the strictures of Jesus were directed less against the Pharisaism which had so much in common with his own teaching than against individual Pharisees who fell below their own standards. We find one writer describing the Pharisees as

Descendants of the pious men who in Maccabaeen days had vigorously resisted hellenisation, and died as martyrs for their faith, they sought to realise in the most exemplary manner the holiness proclaimed by the Law. This accounts for their great reputation among the mass of people.

But the old cliches are still being repeated in some books:

The Pharisees were hypocrites who emphasized external practices, but who, in secret, disobeyed the precepts.

The Pharisees ... made a pretense of retaining intact the religion of their ancestors, but they thought only of that which is external. They were hypocrites: their religion was a mere show. They fasted continually -- or appeared to fast -- their prayers were endless, and on top of the Divine Law they had imposed innumerable practices which were minute and fantastic, if not often ridiculous. Their hearts were essentially full of pride, ambition and wickedness ...

Children are further told by an English-Canadian writer that

To the Scribes and Pharisees the sabbath was an idol to be worshipped, and they had hedged it around with petty and childish scruples as to what was lawful to do on the Sabbath day. They were in bondage to the day.

The problem of revising the kind of text we have been considering involves, of course, more than the substitution of accurate for inaccurate statements, or the removal of passages that obviously derive from prejudice. What needs to be done is to recreate among Christians a spiritual sympathy with Jewish traditions and faith. Historically, Western Christendom has shown a marked ambiguity toward its Jewish heritage. On the one hand, it has treasured that heritage, for obvious reasons. Jesus was himself a Jew, of Jewish lineage and descent, and it was to his own people that he directed his work in the first place; the first disciples were also Jews. When, in the course of a single generation, Christianity passed over into the Greek world, it was only a stubborn insistence on the Jewish elements in its gospel -- an ardent, instinctive monotheism, a belief in a personal, holy God who is Creator of all things and whose purpose is revealed in history -- embodied in corporate, essentially Jewish, forms of worship which (historically speaking) prevented Christianity from disintegrating into yet another form of Greek religiosity. On the other hand, there is the long record of suffering inflicted on the Jewish people by the Church in the name of Christ -- a record of which the average Christian is entirely ignorant.

The real ground for hope in the present situation is that a widespread and thorough-going stock-taking with respect to the Jews and Christianity's Jewish sources is now in progress among Christians. One important cause of this revaluation is the growing list of scientific studies -- from the Christian as well as the Jewish side -- which in the last few years have broken through the old stereotypes of 1st-century Judaism, and which have done much to correct common misapprehensions about Rabbinic literature.

But there is a more compelling cause, involving a change in the Christian attitude toward the Old Testament. Fr. Démann tells us that "in the great majority of catechisms and manuals of dogma, the place given to the Old Testament is practically nil". The reasons for this neglect are not difficult to understand. For one thing, in the first quarter of the 20th century critical work on the New Testament tended to stress the Hellenistic background of Christianity (the Greek mystery religions, the idea of the "dying god", etc.) and inevitably this led to a weakening of the traditional preoccupation with the Jewish heritage of the new faith.

Moreover, the old "evolutionary" school of Bible scholars viewed the Old Testament not so much as the revelation of God to Israel but as the story of how Israel moved from the virtual superstition of patriarchal days to the lofty monotheism of the great prophets, from narrowly particularist ideas of a Chosen People to a broad universalism, a religion for all mankind. This tended to make the Old Testament simply an interesting, and rather remote, example of

the development of higher and nobler ideas about God given to us by a nation which had (as the saying went) "a genius for religion" -- a book not in itself much more relevant to Christians than, say, the Buddhist scriptures. Modern study of the Gospels, however, finds that the influence of Hellenism on early Christianity was peripheral and the influence on Judaism central -- and Christian scholars are therefore once again seriously concerning themselves with the Old Testament.

Along with this renewed interest has gone the elaboration of a new approach which rejects the "evolutionary" attitude toward the Old Testament and which tries to interpret the Bible from within, as viewed by those who shared its faith and hope.* The new approach sees that the Bible is primarily about a movement of God to man, and only secondarily about a movement of man to God. This means that the Old Testament must be regarded not as the record of how a remote ancient people went from "lower" to "higher" theological conceptions, but as the story of how God worked out His saving purposes in history through the Chosen People of Israel.

Both the reawakened preoccupation with the Jewish heritage of Christianity and the new approach to Old Testament interpretation are bound to have powerful effects in the long run on the attitudes of Christians toward Jews and Judaism. An honest writer of a textbook will no longer be able virtually to ignore the Old Testament with good conscience, or to present it in effect as one religious "classic" among many. If, for example, he is dealing with the topic of Jesus and the Church, he will start from the picture of Genesis: mankind, created for fellowship with God, but separated from Him by its own sin. The succeeding history then becomes Heilsgeschichte, the history of salvation, the story of God's saving purpose worked out in the life of His believing and worshipping people, Israel. Only when he has looked at the story in this light, will he then pass on to explain that within this Israel Jesus was born, and that he died to reconstitute it so that henceforth it might not be limited to one nation only, but might be catholic, including all nations, and that in Abraham and his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

In this way, and as New Testament scholarship increasingly shows the unity of the themes of the New Testament with those of the Old, Christians are forcefully reminded that they are heirs of the Old Testament tradition of belief and worship, and that they are sharers in its benefits. Inevitably there is a new and fruitful meeting between Judaism and Christianity. Christians are taught to look for the origin of the Church in the day when Israel was delivered from Egypt and a Covenant made with it. The Old Testament is once again given a positive value as the record of a valid revelation and the place where Christians no less than Jews are taught fundamental truths of their religion.

There is hope today that religious teaching may come to act as a barrier against, rather than a contributing factor to, the spread of anti-Semitism.

* See my article "The New Old Testament" in COMMENTARY, April 1956.

The 1945 Brief of the Canadian Jewish Congress to the Hope Royal Commission on Education was reproduced in the copies of this Brief provided to the members of the Keiller Mackay Committee.

It is too lengthy for general reproduction, but a copy may be seen at the office of the Canadian Jewish Congress, 150 Beverley Street, Toronto, or the Legislative Library, Queens Park, Toronto.

